

Marriage is Honorable

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My beloved brothers and sisters of the ten stakes on the Brigham Young University campus, the song that was just sung by the choir so beautifully is my favorite, and I feel tonight that “I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord.” This is a most inspiring group of people, and I would say to you—as you know already—that the eyes of the world are upon you, the students of Brigham Young University. As I’ve come to talk to you tonight, I have come not to entertain you—there are others to do that—but to discuss with you some of the deeper things of the gospel program. Most of you are biologically and intellectually maturing and should be ready to think deeply and order your lives accordingly. I believe in the old adage that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” and since perhaps the majority of you have not yet entered into the marriage state, I wish to talk to you tonight about marriage.

While some of our young people marry early, yet there seems to be a tendency toward delaying marriage. A gradual move toward ignoring and even rejecting this vital and basic program is noticeable in our culture. The Lord said, “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). And in

Hebrews we read, “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). We are finding that many young people are obsessed with the idea of more and more education, even to the postponing of their marriages. Only yesterday I met a returned missionary, thirty-five years old, who was little concerned about his bachelorhood and laughed it away.

When the Lord organized his world and established his policies, he could have filled the earth with physical bodies in some other way than that which he designed—perhaps some kind of an incubator process. But it seems that merely filling the earth with humans was not the great objective of our Lord. In order to properly people the world it was necessary that every child born into this world should have two parents, a father and a mother, to teach him, to train him, to love him, that that child should be made aware of what was expected of him.

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As he has done throughout the ages, the Lord reiterated his requirement of those adults who would sire and bear children. The oft-quoted scripture given in 1831 has been basic instruction from the beginning of time and will continue to the end of time, for “God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” He commands, “And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, . . . that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ, the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents” (D&C 68:25). This command was to be “a law unto the inhabitants of Zion” (D&C 68:26), not a mere hope or suggestion. The Lord continues, “And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:28). Remember that this does not cover prayer only, but all the doctrines of the Church and the way of life. And the Lord clinches his command by indicating his displeasure that many of the parents were not training their children, that the children were growing up in wickedness, that they were not seeking the riches of eternity. The command to teach the children seems to be of equal power with the command to sire and bear children. It is a sin to fail to teach the children.

Make your Marriage Eternal

Most of you are unmarried, but we hope that every normal one of you will be married, and we are reminding you now, with all the power and influence we have, so that none of you will fail a proper marriage and that you will so completely fortify that institution that it will be an eternal one. We are gravely concerned about the number of our people who are being married out of the temple and even out of the Church. Then we’re gravely concerned again about that unbelievable number who permit their marriages to go stale and let them be destroyed. May I say that almost all

marriages could be beautiful, harmonious, happy, and eternal ones, if the two people primarily involved would determine that it should be, that it must be, that it will be.

A recent spot-check of stakes reveals that fewer than forty percent of the marriages in those stakes were temple marriages. The figures increased in these stakes only 2.9 percent in four years, or less than one percent a year. How long will it take us at that rate to reach a reasonable record? Of course there are a substantial number of sealings after marriage, but we’re mindful also that many of the original marriages fail and end in divorce. We wonder why—why nearly sixty percent of our people would be satisfied with less than an eternal marriage.

One of the more prominent reasons for non-temple marriages is marriage to nonmembers. This figure is frightening. In those same stakes, more than twenty-five percent of the marriages were those with nonmembers. Again, this worries us greatly. Certain studies in the past have indicated that in these marriages some wonderful people who were not members have later joined the Church and become faithful members. We are grateful for every convert who comes in through this door, but the chances are against conversion. The study shows that for every nonmember spouse who joins the Church there are approximately six who never join the Church, and this unequal yoking brings problems. The nonmember spouse could be even more righteous than the member, but what happens often is that neither is faithful to the Church, or both fall away, or there are frictions, ending frequently in divorce; and numerous children have grown up out of the Church because the parents were selfish and had not thought of them in the marriage.

If forty percent of the members married for eternity and twenty-five percent married nonmembers, this leaves another thirty-five percent who married in the Church but with

seeming little interest in the eternal nature of their marriage. Whether or not these figures are accurate, it does reveal that someone does not understand. This is the reason that I chose the subject of marriage for this address.

May I inject here that selfishness is the element that breaks and corrodes and destroys marriages, as it destroys lives and all that is good. The time to make good marriages for the turn of this century is now, in the 1970s. Now is the time to organize your program, to set your standards, to solidify your determination, and to prepare for that married period of your life which will be hard, demanding, and difficult, but which will be rewarding and beautiful and eternal in its nature. The Lord has ordained that each of these mature spirits which he has created shall be permitted to come to this earth at a proper time, be provided with a small, pure body and a mind uncluttered, be given a loving home with two parents to teach and train him, and come to maturity through numerous, varied growth experiences, then in turn to marry, provide bodies for another generation, and go through the same process, working toward this eternal plan.

You have been a child; you are now an adult and about ready to enter this next phase, which is married life. Some of you are now married, some of you are anticipating, and still others of you are quietly hopeful. Next you will find your eternal companion and you will marry, and you will beget and bear children. And then begins the long, difficult, but loving process of training them toward godhood.

First Things First

As I visit with missionaries I remind them of their many specific goals: to get their marriage, their family, their education, their occupation, their training. They can, by careful planning, have all the blessings they want if they take first things first. For instance, if they marry first, their chance for a mission is greatly limited, if not locked out. If they get their

schooling first, their chance for a mission is limited. Taken on a basis of priorities, practically every normal young man can have a wonderful mission, a good marriage, a satisfactory educational training, each in its turn, having all.

The training you get in the universities, while excellent, is limited. It is but a very tiny percentage of the total knowledge. We encourage knowledge and its proper use, but we know there will be a thousand years to study about *things*, and compared to the years spent in universities, that great learning period is relatively limitless. When we're ready to create our own worlds and give leadership thereto, we will have great knowledge. Since knowledge is power, we will have power. Since knowledge can make us creative, we can be creators. Since knowledge can lead to judgment and wisdom, we can be just and worthy and wise. But we cannot wait for marriage until we have accumulated the knowledge we finally will need and want to have in order to create. We need the power of the priesthood to effect the creation, and it will have to be there; you hold the priesthood and can use it as you accumulate the secular knowledge.

The book of John begins:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him [the Word, Jesus Christ]; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. [John 1:1-4]

Again, in 1 John, he says:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

(. . . and [we] shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) . . .

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. [1 John 1:1–2, 4]

For following this program that the Lord has set up for us is the only way to have full joy.

And again, we find that the early apostles knew more of the program than they have been given credit for. Paul told the Hebrews:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, . . . by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, . . . sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Being made so much better than the angels. [Hebrews 1:1–4]

I feel certain that all the knowledge that is available will not be enough to give the power to create worlds without the priesthood and the power thereof. When we shall have learned all about medicine, mineralogy, zoology, forestry, biology, and all the other “-ologies” and all about the heavens and the earth in all of its moods, then, if we also know theology and know it well and abide by its precepts, perhaps then we can exercise our accumulated power to create an earth for our exalted family.

Do Not Postpone Marriage and Children

But, of course, marriage cannot wait for that. We shall marry, have our families, teach and train them, while we are learning these other things and building toward our creatorship. Marriage should come when we are reasonably young, to procreate and bear children, to have the patience to teach and train them and to grow up with them. Hence, marriage is

a must, an early must. Of course, we would decry child marriages, but when young people are in their upper years of collegiate work surely it is time to plan this important life’s work. Missionaries should begin to think marriage—when they return from their missions, to begin to get acquainted with many young women so that they will have a better basis for selection of a life’s companion. And when the time comes they should marry in the holy temple and have their families, and complete their education, and establish themselves in a profitable and rewarding occupation, and give themselves to their families, the gospel, and the Church.

Brothers and sisters, this is not a matter of jest. It isn’t anything to laugh about. This is the most serious thing in all the world that lies ahead of you unmarried young people.

The *San Francisco Chronicle and Examiner* had an article in it last year entitled “The Anti-Marriage Revolution.” The article came from a young woman, not a member, who wrote to me:

I wish it were possible for all these misguided, unfortunate young people to become receptive to your message. . . I am investigating the Mormon Church and one of the most favorable aspects of the wonderful teachings is the concern and rapport for and with the young people. That, as well as other reasons, keeps me diligently studying to become worthy for membership in the Mormon Church. [Letter from Miss Nagene Ellis]

In magazines we frequently see articles on this antimarriage revolution, although we don’t hear about it so much in our little communities here. Let me say again, marriage is honorable. It’s a plan of God. It is not a whim, a choice, a preference only; it’s a must.

We are talking to normal young people. Generally there are husbands for most young women. There might be an occasional young woman who does not find her companion, but

there is little excuse for the normal young man. I tell young women who seem to have missed their chance for desirable marriage that they should do all in their power to make themselves attractive physically in dress and grooming, mentally in being knowledgeable on many subjects, spiritually in being responsive emotionally in being genuine and worthy. And if one fails to find a companion after having done everything possible, then there will be provision for her in eternity.

The first commandment recorded seems to have been “Multiply and replenish the earth.” Let no one ever think that the command came to have children without marriage. No such suggestion could ever have foundation. When God had created the woman, he brought her unto the man and gave her to him as his wife, and commanded, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

There is enough in that one line to make a hundred sermons. Think it through very carefully, every word. This was not the evolution of Adam to human status. Adam was already an intelligent, trained, and knowledgeable man. He was a prophet in his first recorded days on earth (see Moses 5), and this prophet blessed God and prophesied concerning his posterity. He saw the future and proclaimed:

In this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God.

And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.

And Adam and Eve. . . made all things known unto their sons and their daughters. . .

. . . [They] *ceased not to call upon God.* [Moses 5: 10-12, 16]

In true order, Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived and bore Adam’s children—many children. And a book of remembrance was kept, and recordings were made in the language of Adam. And angels came from God to teach them by the spirit of revelation. Their children—thirty-three sons and twenty-three daughters, according to Josephus—were taught to read and write in the language which was pure and undefiled. Adam and his righteous sons were baptized, received the Holy Ghost, and received the priesthood. They kept the genealogical records of their fast-expanding families. This would indicate, then, that Adam was a great man when we first are introduced to him. He didn’t come from the jungle.

I have told many groups of young people that they should not postpone their marriage until they have acquired all of their education ambitions. I have told tens of thousands of young folks that when they marry they should not wait for children until they have finished their schooling and financial desires. Marriage is basically for the family, and when people have found their proper companions there should be no long delay. They should live together normally and let the children come.

There seems to be a growing feeling that marriage is for legal sex, for sex’s sake. Marriage is basically for the family; that is why we marry—not for the satisfaction of the sex, as the world around us would have us believe. When people have found their companions, there should be no long delay. Young wives should be occupied in bearing and rearing their children. I know of no scriptures where an authorization is given to young wives to withhold their families and to go to work to put their husbands through school. There are thousands of husbands who have worked their own way through school and have reared families at the same time. Though it is more difficult, young people can make their way through their educational programs. On most campuses there are married student

buildings for their living. It's a good experience to learn to save and to scratch and to economize.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., gave us this:

There is some belief, too much I fear, that sex desire is planted in us solely for the pleasures of full gratification; that the begetting of children is only an unfortunate incident. The direct opposite is the fact. Sex desire was planted in us in order to be sure that bodies would be begotten to house the spirits; the pleasure of gratification of the desire is an incident, not the primary purpose of the desire.

He said further:

As to sex in marriage, the necessary treatise on that for Latter-day Saints can be written in two sentences: Remember the prime purpose of sex desires is to beget children. Sex gratifications must be had at that hazard. You husbands, be kind and considerate of your wives. They are not your property; they are not mere conveniences; they are your partners for time and eternity. [General Priesthood Conference, October 1949, pp. 194–95]

Billy Graham gave us this statement:

One thing the Bible does not teach is that sex in itself is sin. Far from being prudish, the Bible celebrates sex and its proper use, presenting it as God-created, God-ordained, God-blessed. It makes plain that God himself implanted the physical magnetism between the sexes for two reasons: for the propagation of the human race, and for the expression of that kind of love between man and wife that makes for true oneness. His command to the first man and woman to be "one flesh" was as important as his command to be "fruitful and multiply".

The Bible makes plain that evil, when related to sex, means not the use of something inherently corrupt, but the misuse of something pure and good. It teaches that sex can be a wonderful servant, but a terrible master. It can be a creative force more

powerful than any other in fostering of love, companionship, happiness, or can be the most destructive of all life's forces. [Reader's Digest, May 1970, p. 118]

Another thing. It is my opinion that young women often frustrate their own best interests. Generally they are as well off financially on the campus as are their young men counterparts, especially those who have spent their accumulated funds on missions, so that young women should not be demanding of expensive dinners and corsages and cars and other things which often are the basis for dates and courtship. Perhaps the high cost of courting may be one reason for the delayed courtships and marriages. Young people, then, should date and court in a serious mood, and when the right time and the right person come there should be marriage and family and real life.

Last week I tore out of a magazine a full-page advertisement with a picture of Albert Einstein, with his drooping eyes, his sleepy looks, and his tousled hair. This was the great Einstein, highly publicized, greatly admired. It was stated that Albert Einstein admitted that he had had only two ideas in his life. These had brought him fame and universal honor.

This is about all that you young people need, two ideas: (1) Where am I going? (2) How do I get there? Again: First, what is my goal, and, second, how do I reach it? Of course, that includes numerous lesser secondary goals. If we turn our eyes from our basic goal and get diverted along the way, we shall, like Little Red Riding Hood, lose our way and run into trouble with the wolf. Basic then to this goal is proper and lasting and loving marriage.

Great promises are made to every couple, and this by the Lord and his prophets, that as parents plan their lives and carry forward their marriage in selflessness and rear their children with care and love, they have rejoicing in their posterity throughout their lives. Their joy is full; their cup runneth over.

As we approach this vital subject, we are reminded of the scripture where the Lord says:

Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know not whence ye are: . . .

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. [Luke 13:24–25, 28]

And again, we repeat for emphasis from Matthew: “Enter ye in at the strait gate.” That’s an *s-t-r-a-i-t* gate, not the shortest distance between two points. *Strait* means hard, difficult, exacting, that kind of a gate. And that’s the kind of a gate that marriage is. An eternal marriage is also strait and difficult, but it’s rewarding and beautiful. “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13–14).

Now, all Latter-day Saints are not going to be exalted. All people who have been through the holy temple are not going to be exalted. The Lord says, “Few there be that find it.” For there are the two elements: (1) the sealing of a marriage in the holy temple, and (2) righteous living through one’s life thereafter to make that sealing permanent. Only through proper marriage—and I repeat that—only through proper marriage can one find that strait way, the narrow path. No one can ever have life, real life, in any other way under any other program. Sexual life outside of marriage, whether it be heterosexual or homosexual, is as a dream of the night that fades when the sun comes up. It is as the froth that accumulates on pounding waters.

Today, to offset and neutralize the evil teachings in the media and on the cameras and in the show and on the street, we must teach marriage, proper marriage, eternal marriage. When we realize the great number of young people who do not marry in the temple, we wonder if we have been failing our responsibility.

What we are saying about eternal marriage is not my opinion nor the opinion of the leaders of the Church. This is the word of God, which supersedes all opinions.

Rejection of Marriage Is a Sin

There seems to be a growing trend against marriage—in the movie colonies, in the social groups—toward having sex without family, sex without marriage even. Naturally the next question is, Why marriage? It’s only a slip of paper, they say. And the antimarriage revolution comes into focus. Arguments are given that children are a burden, a tie, a responsibility. Men and women cohabit. They sin. They are guilty of deep transgression and seemingly without conscience. They have convinced themselves that education, freedom from restraint and responsibility—that’s the life. And unfortunately this benighted and destructive idea is taking hold of even some of our own people.

Do you ever read a great writer or speaker who does not decry the loose permissiveness of the age and the abandonment of the family? The great thinkers all speak of the family as being the cement, the welding link, the foundation of civilization. That being true, then all the other vagaries and theories are but chaff that blows away and has no substance. Marriage is ordained of God. It is necessary and a delightful condition. It is the only true state, and the fact that many marriages fail does not change the rightness of marriage.

Some people say, “I am afraid of marriage. I fear temple marriage.” To that person we can only say, “Then you are not prepared for

marriage. You are still immature." A holy, happy, unending marriage may be enjoyed by every couple if they will it so. And if it be that kind of a union, surely every couple would want it to be eternal; and a happy marriage can. And a happy, selfless marriage will bring happy, normal children and a happy life. Surely selfish parents can bring a veritable hell to their children.

Remember, "for this is a day of warning," the scripture says, "and not a day of many words. For I, the Lord, am not to be mocked in the last days" (D&C 63:58). Can you think of any worse mockery than a civil marriage, than no marriage at all? "Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, even Jesus Christ" (D&C 63:60).

Marriage should be solemnized in the holy temple, by an appointed leader ordained by the prophet who holds the keys. Paul told the Corinthians, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39). *Only in the Lord.*

Significant is the brilliant answer of the Savior to the Sadducees who tried to trap him:

Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

And last of all the woman died also.

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. [Matthew 22:24–28]

They felt they had one question that he never could answer, that his face would turn red, that he would be embarrassed. Whose wife shall she be of the seven? Well, the answer was very simple, wasn't it? None of them would have

her in eternity. She wouldn't be in exaltation because they were none of them married for eternity. They were all married "till death do you part," the most deceptive little phrase in our language. The answer of Jesus was perfect. That's the basis for my sermon tonight. They could have no further argument. Here was his answer:

Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

This answer yielded to no argument. None of the seven would husband her. She would have no husband; they would have no wife. None of the marriages were temple marriages; none were "in the Lord" or by the Lord or his authorized servants. Death ended each of the unions. There was no efficacy to any of them.

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. [Matthew 22:31–32]

Let's examine that a moment. The Lord says again through Mark, "Ye therefore do *greatly err*" (Mark 12:27). First it was a question, "Don't you err, not knowing the scriptures?" and then he said, "*You do err*, not knowing the scriptures." God's plan is for those who live, not for those who die; for those who receive the light, not for those who walk in darkness; for those who are prepared for eternal life, and not for those who are satisfied with casual and sinful living. These people did not know the God of the burning bush. They did not know the God of Abraham or Isaac or Jacob; yet they had the scriptures before them. They were travelers in the wilderness, who had no

defined plans. They knew not our God nor his power.

Do Your Own Temple Work

No one who voluntarily rejects marriage here in mortality has any assurance of eternal life. Now, there is a great difference between one who doesn't hear it, doesn't know it, and one who rejects it, because that is inherent in the word; they couldn't reject it if they didn't know it. The day is coming soon when no one will need to die without a temple marriage. There are already fifteen temples, new ones being built. The day will come when there will be hundreds of temples all over this world, when there will not be a soul in the world, probably, who is more than a thousand miles away; and for a one-time experience in all one's life, a thousand miles is not far to go. It wouldn't be far to crawl if one knew what he was getting and what he was missing if he didn't go.

Remember, the temples of God are not for the vicarious temple ordinances for those who have known the gospel. I'm sure we misunderstand that. Those who live as you have lived for twenty years—as some of you will live for forty years and eighty years—this vicarious temple work isn't for you. You do your work yourselves. That's your job, to go up to the temple and get your endowments when you're properly matured—your job, not your parents' job or the responsibility of people after them, to give you blessings or even to open the door to blessings for you if you are not interested enough to get them for yourself. It's for your grandfather and your great-great-grandparents and my great-great-grandparents. Those are the ones we go to the temple for. Those are the ones we do the work for, those who were born when there was no gospel on the earth, when there was no temple or idea of a temple.

God is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. And people who close their eyes and their ears and fail to follow the commandments of God are dead. They're dead as to all the

things that are worthy: dead as to the benefits, dead as to the blessings, dead as to this natural and eternal gift.

Temple sealings are for your ancestors, the people who could have traveled all over the world and never found a temple or a temple president or helpers to take them through and give them their endowments—people who were good, good as you and I are good, or better, and who may have neared perfection in their lives. But there were no temples; there were no temple workers. They had to wait. We must do their work for them. That's why we have our genealogical work. That's why we have the temple.

We go forward and we have the work done for those who die. But we have no guarantee that anyone will ever receive the gospel when we do it for him after his death. We hope he will; we go forward and we hope that he will accept the gospel. But we have no assurance whatever that he will ever accept it. For people are very much the same when they arise from the resurrection as they are on the day they were buried. It's for them to accept it; and it's for you to accept it, today, while you live, while you can, while you have your own free agency.

Our Lord is not the God of the dead. Those who marry civilly by secular means to avoid the restrictions in dress by reason of the garments, or by reason of restrictions as to divorce, fun, freedoms, so-called, are postponing to their own peril. Are not they the dead? Remember, our temple work is for those who have passed on without opportunity, not for those who have had opportunity and rejected it. There's a tremendous difference between him who misses the blessing and him who rejects the blessing. Men of our day calculate and evaluate and develop opinions and "kick against the pricks" and close the door to their own opportunities. You won't do that, will you? These people are like the Pharisees, the Sadducees. They are like the Pharisees and the hypocrites and the scribes who "shut up the

kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matthew 23: 13).

But could there be any excuse for any of us? Few of us have joined the Church recently. Most of us have been in the Church all our lives. Most of us have seen the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price upon the mantel all of our twenty years. And we haven't stopped to find out exactly what it means, how deep it goes. "Everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, . . . that [is] not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead" (D&C 132: 13). Men may perform the marriages, certainly. We will continue to do so. Our hope is everlasting, and we will continue to do the work of those who didn't do it; but we have no assurance, as I've said. Mortal death terminates a mortal marriage. Now, don't kid yourself, using that slang phrase. Don't try to be opinionated about this thing. Don't try to argue yourself out of it. You're either married by the word of the Lord, by his servant, or you're not married after you're dead. And death comes, regardless of how we would push it off if we could.

A few months ago a call came from a sister whose husband had been dead for some years, whose son and his wife had recently been killed in an airplane accident, leaving several small children. Alone, in deep anguish, this sweet woman with many regrets told me that these young victims of the airplane crash had not been married in the temple. They were middle-aged, both coming from good families. They had either ignored it or postponed it. They had lived the majority of their lifetime on the earth and still had not had this ordinance performed. They became single, and their children orphans.

At death our sympathies, of course, are gravely stirred. And oftentimes at funerals speakers, in their kindness, make to the living mourners many promises that could not be

substantiated by scripture. I have heard them many times promise that this good man will go direct to eternal life, and yet he has not been married in the temple, and his life didn't warrant it anyway. He had the gospel; he had the opportunities; he ignored his privileges. He will unfortunately drink the dregs of the bitter cup. And so will you if you fail this important thing.

I remember an article in a local newspaper, telling of a young couple married in Salt Lake by a man who had only civil authority—no power beyond the grave. They had a brilliant wedding breakfast. They got into the car to travel to another city for an evening wedding reception, where hundreds of friends and relatives would come to wish them well. They did not reach their destination. There was no reception. A car accident took their lives. Their mortality was ended. An eternal life had not been provided for. About three hours of marriage, and the end of it came like a flash of lightning. And the sad thing was that their three-hour marriage was performed within a mile of the holy Temple, where a man with the sealing power would gladly have saved them from the bitter cup.

They're in eternity now. I don't know what they're thinking or what they're doing, but they're not prepared for eternity. They had grown to twenty years or more of life and they didn't go to the temple, even though they were members of the Church. They ignored it. They left it. If they ever gave a serious thought, do you suppose they were saying, "Oh, we can have the sealing ordinance performed later"? Do you suppose the bereaved family was thinking, "Well, it's too bad; but then, we can go to the temple in a year and have the work done for them"?

Yes, the family can go to the temple a year later. Yes, they can do the ordinance work for them. And the records will show it. But the question is, Will the young deceased couple accept the ordinances when they were of such

little consequence to them while they lived? And more important than all else, do you think that God is going to be mocked? He is the God of the living, not of the dead. And they were dead, both physically and also, it would seem, spiritually. He has identified this ordinance as one to be done in mortality while you have your body and your spirit together. Perhaps not any scripture emanating from the mouth of God has been so definite and positive and unchangeable as those we are quoting. It has been said that we rise from the grave much as we lie down in it. We change little in our attitudes and moods and desires in that period when our spirit is freed from our body that is in the grave. The process of change in the body does not necessarily change the inner man. If the gospel truths mean little to us as we die, they are not likely to mean very much to us when we rise.

Have you ever known couples who ignored the temple marriage and had tragedy take one of them in unexpected death? Have you seen the surviving spouse rush to the temple when the year is ended to endow by proxy the deceased spouse and have the sealing done? Have you ever realized that there is no magic in death, that ceasing to breathe does not make angels of careless people, does not make believers of disbelievers, does not bring faith where there was skepticism?

In such situations I always think of the ten virgins parable, where the five wise virgins took their lamps filled with oil to meet the bridegroom. Then the five foolish virgins, who had slumbered and slept, came at midnight when the bridegroom was announced. They begged oil of their neighbors, but without success; and with their unlighted vessels they came fumbling and shuffling along, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But the bridegroom said, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not" (Matthew 25:11–12). Now, that isn't being mean; that isn't being unkind; it's just following a program. They knew it; they had their

lamps; they knew they needed oil in their lamps. They didn't provide it.

It was Job who said,

What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment? [Job 7:17–18]

Man is the very son of God. This accounts for God's great concern for him. Job also said,

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? [Job 7:1]

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. . . .

Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. [Job 14:1–2,5]

Now let us look into latter-day scriptures. For long centuries the gospel was not upon the earth, not available to the best of saints. From the day of the martyrdom of the apostles following the crucifixion of the Christ till the third decade of the 1800s there was not one soul on the earth qualified to endow and marry and seal for eternity. There was not a holy temple on the entire earth. There was not a prophet holding sacred keys to open eternal doors. It is principally for the good people of those centuries that we do the work for the dead. They could not do it themselves. They had neither the knowledge, the temples, nor the keys on the earth. But in the twenties and the thirties in the nineteenth century began to come the revelations of the Lord. They came pouring out almost like a flood, seemingly to make up for the long lost time of the Dark Ages. This was as spoken by Joel the prophet, quoting the Lord:

I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth. [Joel 2:28–30]

And so in 1820 the revelations began to pour out upon us. The prophets began again to prophesy and interpret and direct, the Church began to thrive and grow, the temples began to rise, the ordinances began to be performed, and men began to prepare in earnest for the great day of the Lord.

Now, there are many who still ignore the right ways of the Lord. I mentioned that more than half of our young people ignore the sacred ordinances, having their marriages performed merely by men of the world with the authority of principalities and powers of the world for a worldly marriage that cannot last.

The prophets of the Lord had already opened the vista 1,800 years ago. Paul had told us of the “seventh heaven”; and the celestial glory, compared to the sun in brilliance; and the terrestrial glory, likened to the moon; and the telestial glory, compared to the stars in glory. The Lord had already said much that should have been a warning to the readers of the scriptures; but since they did not understand, the voice of the Lord came again.

Time is passing. Time is fleeing. We have no guarantee for continued living. Procrastination is a veritable thief. We mortals have had twenty or forty or eighty years to come to a knowledge of the truth and to abide by the requirements. For us who neglect or procrastinate or deny or reject, the doors are closing. As with the ten virgins, the day is passing. Darkness approaches.

Now think about it. Many reject the priesthood today—thousands of them. Many reject eternal marriage—thousands of them. They are

offered it. They will not accept it. Will it always, even in eternity, be handed out to them, forced upon them? Can a man change his mind and grasp it as time goes on? These are solemn questions. Those who have accepted and failed to live up to its requirements, will they have it or lose it in time and eternity?

I tell you, folks, God will not be mocked. He has given us a program. He has given us a chance for mature consideration. He is not playing games with us. It is the most vital of all decisions. First, we must develop that worthiness which makes one eligible for the blessing. Second, we must grasp the opportunity of the ordinance. And third, we must remain faithful and worthy to that marriage and to all righteousness. Then the promised blessings may not be withheld by anyone.

Again, the Lord reiterates the message:

If a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me or by my word, . . . then it is not valid neither of force when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world it cannot be received there, because the angels and the gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory; for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God. [D&C 132:18]

I tell you again, no statements have ever been made with greater force or power. There is no place for opinion or for argument. Such a temporal marriage is in the world and cannot be received other than in the world.

The Lord speaks. of the angels and says that their rewards do not compare with those of men and women “who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory” (D&C 132: 16). We’ve always grown up thinking of the angels as being the last word in righteousness, haven’t we? The angels are

greatly inferior to every person in this room who will live all these commandments the Lord requires at the hands of these persons. When the Lord speaks of “the angels and the gods [who] are appointed” at the gate (D&C 132:18), it reminds us of immigration laws as we go into the various countries of the world. Like the immigration officers, the angels will receive the visas, the passports. They will check the prerequisites; they will see if the documents are all in order. They have an appointment as gatekeepers. The Lord again is emphatic, saying that those who have not earned the reward of eternal life shall not pass—shall not pass. “They cannot, therefore, inherit my glory” (D&C 132:18).

Kingdoms, Principalities, Power, and Dominions

Now, on the positive side, these are blessings which will be available to those who meet the requirements. They are promised blessings of kingdoms, principalities, power, and dominions—all heights and depths. As I come into the United States Immigration offices frequently, each gatekeeper has a large book and he quickly looks at my name on the passport and then opens this huge book and looks under *K* to see if I am on the blacklist, to see if there’s anything wrong, if I have been unworthy of entrance into this kingdom, this republic. And so shall it be when men go to their permanent homes. The angels and gods will be at the gate. They will know your records; they will have the records. Of those who are faithful and have the ordinance and live worthy of it, the promise is made, “And they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation” (D&C 132:19). We are further promised a glory “which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue;

then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them” (D&C 132:19–20).

Now this, again I say, is not a matter of opinion. This isn’t something you can go out and argue about. The judges at the gate will know by it for sure—the formula, the records, the spirit, the true desserts. The book of life will show the earthly activities of the earthly servants, and the book of the angels will give the entire story of every man—of that which he did in the light and in the shadows, in the open and in the corners; all that was said in the secret places and from the housetops; all that was thought and expressed, whether good or bad. There will be no escape. The honest judge will give full value to all for their good work and will not overlook the other.

I have repeated the conditions and the restrictions and the glories and the benefits because we are all inclined to let them pass by. But the Lord has repeated over and over, as his message of the revelation came to Joseph over and over, and as we read the scriptures over and over, and again: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory” (D&C 132:21). No musts or ifs or questions there. There’s no room for argument or quibbling. This is forthright and sure.

Now, let me say here lest someone misunderstand, we’re not talking about plural marriage, as some might think. We’re talking about the eternal law of marriage, or temple marriage, as referred to in the 131st section, wherein he, the Lord, says eight words that leave no question: “[meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]” (D&C 131:2). This is the covenant wherein a man and a woman are conditionally sealed for eternity. That’s the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, which came in our day for us.

The Lord said in 1843 again, “Strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives [*plural*, of the lives, our great posterity in the eternities

that follow], and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me. But if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation" (D&C 132:22–23), subject, of course, to your continued worthiness. If we receive him in this world, if we go to the temple worthily, receive our endowments, our sealing program, then the Lord guarantees us—providing, of course, our continued worthiness—guarantees us an exaltation, continuation of lives, creatorship, and all of the great blessings that any righteous man might want.

Significant also is the counter verse: "Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law" (D&C 132:25). The gate that is wide and easy of access is the gate wherein comes destruction.

In our own dispensation God has said those few will know him and will receive their exaltation and be with him. The mysteries are promised. The Lord on one occasion said:

And the mysteries of the kingdom ye shall keep within yourselves; for it is not meet to give that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls unto swine, lest they trample them under their feet.

For the world cannot receive that which ye, yourselves, are not able to bear; wherefore ye shall not give your pearls unto them, lest they turn again and rend you. [Matthew 7:10–12 (Inspired Version)]

Now, this is a good question the Lord asks. He asks it of everyone of you. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). He made it very clear. "He that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Luke 6:49). Now, young

folks, as I near the conclusion, may I plead with you that you never consider for one moment forsaking this great principle.

Yesterday a young woman said to her fiance, "If you cannot get a temple recommend, then I am not about to spend my life with you." Now, there's a lot of strength in that. If his bishop and his stake president will not sign a recommend for him, "there is something wrong—something that's going to show up after they're married, after they have a family, something that's going to continue. A certain young missionary said to his girlfriend, "I am sorry. As much as I love you, I will not marry out of the temple."

We Can All Have the Blessings

On the brighter side, may I bring to your attention that some months ago I divided a stake, making two excellent ones in its place. In searching for a new president for a stake, we employ the process of elimination. We get records, and we go there and have an interview with each one, and I find out all I can about these men, because anyone of them might possibly qualify to be the stake president. Of the men we interviewed, we found that 29 men had 121 children. The average was 4.3 children per family, or 6.3 persons per family. Not a single divorce among them. This was only 29 out of a community; there may have been hundreds more. But of these 29 men that I interviewed, there was not a single divorce among them—no broken homes in these 29 families. Every child of the 121 had two parents, a father and a mother—which is often not the case these days, to have two parents, a mother and a father. No divorce had broken these homes. All of the men were fairly well employed and fairly well housed. Forty-three of the children were teenagers, but there were no serious problems. They probably had some questions, as many young people do, but there were no serious problems. Everyone of these 29 men was married in the holy temple. Everyone of these 121 children was born under

the covenant. None of you have any right, any right whatever, to rob your children of that privilege. Not anyone of you has that right. When you marry you should marry for your family, not for your selfish desires and passions. Every one of the 29 men was married in the temple, and every one was faithful in carrying forward the work of the Lord.

I wondered why the Lord used Abraham especially for his pattern and example. Then I read, "Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment" (D&C 132:29), face to face with his eternal God. Every person in this room can have that same experience if he will do the works of Abraham. And the Lord said, "I am . . . the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob" (D&C 136:21). Abraham was tested and was true and faithful. The Father had made him. And the Lord said again that Abraham "hath entered into his exaltation and now sitteth upon his throne" (D&C 132:29). Abraham followed the path I am telling you you should follow. And you can follow the same one and find your exaltation and find your throne and sit upon it. And so the great commandments and promises can be had by all of us.

And so we wonder why, with all these blessings and promises, men will fail to marry and fail to marry right, and thus waste their lives in a frozen wilderness. Why will any person ever give a single thought to a marriage out of the temple and jeopardize those glories that are available? Why would a person with a temple marriage ever think of divorce or breaking up a family or of any other immoralities or infidelities? Why? Oh, why?

Some years ago I spoke on this campus about a certain king who abdicated his throne for love of a woman and with that abdication lost his kingdom, acclaim, and riches. And while there are few kings today who abdicate their thrones, there are numerous princes in this church who abdicate their thrones before

they come to them, for they were born to become priests and gods forever and ever.

As I conclude this address, may I bring you back to the 76th, 131st, and 132nd sections of the Doctrine and Covenants and many others, and may I repeat for emphasis some of the lines we have quoted:

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees.

A man must enter into this order of the priesthood.

. . . the new and everlasting covenant.

And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

That is the end of his kingdom: he cannot have an increase.

Prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you.

If ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

All . . . shall abide the law. . . it was instituted for the fulness of my glory.

All covenants [must be made] . . . for time and for all eternity . . . through the medium of mine anointed.

All contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.

And everything that is in the world . . . that [is] . . . not by me . . . shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead. . . . [It] shall be shaken and destroyed.

If a man marry him a wife in the world . . . not by me nor by my word . . . not of force when they are dead.

When they are out of the world . . . [the righteous may be] appointed angels in heaven . . . ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.

For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain . . . without exaltation . . . to all eternity.

And . . . henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever.

. . . is not valid neither of force when they are out of the world.

They cannot pass . . . the angels and the gods [who] are appointed there.

Then shall they be gods, because they have no end . . . above all, because all things are subject unto them.

And the angels are subject unto them.

Except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory.

Few [find the strait and narrow way], because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me.

But . . . ye [who] receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation; that where I am ye shall be also.

Let me close with a little story that I told after returning from Europe in 1955. I had been to the temple dedication. One German woman whom I knew had lost her husband in the war. When I was in the temple at its dedication in

Bern, this sweet German woman told me her story. Her husband had disappeared ten years before. That was in 1945, when the war ended. No word was ever had from him or news of his whereabouts. It was presumed that he was dead. After the dedication, having talked to President McKay about it and having the permission, this sweet woman went through the temple for her endowments. I saw her again as she went to the counter to get her clothing. I saw her in the session with contentment and peace upon her face. I saw her after the temple service, and she said to me with great satisfaction, "Brother Kimball, I have now been sealed to my husband. Let the war come. Let the persecutions pile up. Let the bombs burst. Let whatever need be come that war brings on. I'm all right now. I'm sealed to my husband and I am at peace and life is good."

As we close, we seem to hear a gracious and loving God reminding us, "I gave you your opportunity. I taught you the right principles. You knew better. When you refuse to hearken you will suffer the consequences." He is saying a man must enter into this new and everlasting covenant or he cannot be exalted. "You did not listen. If you abide not that covenant, then you are damned. All those who have this law revealed to them must obey the same. All marriage contracts not by me are of no efficacy in the life to come. Fail in this law and you can never be gods. Obey not my law and you cannot obtain my glory." "Receive ye, therefore, my law," the Lord said (D&C 132:24).

Now, my young brothers and sisters, if I meet any of you beyond the veil—I'll reach there before you do—don't anyone of you ever come to Brother Kimball and say, "You didn't tell me. I didn't understand. Nobody warned me of this. I came to my marriage without knowledge."

God bless you, my brothers and sisters. This is a vital message. I hope it has sunk into your hearts. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

