Priest's Lesson, PV 1st Ward, 2 Feb., 1975 'Clean Speech'

We mentioned last time that we'd like to continue talking about the use of clean language. Last time we sort of talked about the "thou shalt not swear aspect. There's just one more item in that connection and then I'd like to proceed with the more positive aspect of the use of language and what it can do for us; not only to not use these bad words but the positive approach to the use of language.

You'll recall from church history that one time Joseph Smith was placed in jail. Parley P. Pratt in his autobiography described an event there that involved the use of foul language. I'd like to read it to you again toxmakexsurexyouxwexheard though I'm sure you've heard it several times. This is Parley P. Pratt in his autho autobiography describing what went on. "In one of those tedious nights we had lain as till if in sleep, the hour of midnight had passed, and our ears and our hearts had been pained by while we had listened four hours to the obscene jests, the \_\_\_\_\_\_, and the dreadful blasphemies, and filthy language of our guards, \_\_\_\_\_\_ at their head as they recounted to each other deeds of rapine, murder, robbery and so forth which they had committed among the Mormons at Far West and boasted the defiling by vacinity. force wives, daughters, and virgins, and of shooting or dashing out the brains of men, womenand children. I had listened till I had become

so disgusted, shocked, horrified and so filled with the spirit of indignent justice that I could hardly refrain from rising upon my feet and rebuking the guards, but/had/ that had said nothing to Joseph or anyone else although I lay next to him and knew he was awake. On a , he, speaking of Josephy Smith arose to his feet and spoke with a voice of thunder or as a roaring lion, uttering as nearly as I can recollect the following words, "Silence ye fields of the infernal pit. In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke you and command you to be still. I will not live another minute and hear such language. Cease such talk, or ye or I die this instant." Joseph ceased to speak. He stood erect in majesty. Chained and without weapon, calm, unruffled and dignified as an angel he looked upon the quailing guards whose peapons were lowered abruptxtexthexground or dropped to the ground, whose knees smote together, and who shrinking into a corner, or crouching at his feet begged his pardon and remained quiet until the change of guards. I have seen the , (ministers?) of justice, clothed in majesterial robes and criminals arraigned before them while life was suspended on a breath in the courts of England. I have witnessed a congr3ss in solemn session to give laws to nations. I have tried to conceive of kings, of royal courts, of thrones and crowns, of emporers assembled to decide the fate of kingdoms, but

majesty have I seen but once, as it stood in chains at midnight in am a dungeon in an obscure billage in Missouri."

We have often heard the expression "see ourselves as others see us," and that's hard to do, but it's a good thing to do at times, to see ourselves asothers see us. But there's an expression that's just as important in analygous????, "hear ourselves as others hear us. Let me turn and write that one on the board, as that's what we're sort of talking about today. HEAR OURSELVES AS OTHERS HEAR US.

WEXXX Wouldn't you like to be a mind reader? ("No, cause you'd know everything that everybody was thinking about you and about other people ----- Rob, I think you have a point. You know, we can, in a sense, be a mind reader, at least we can have insights into the minds of XXXXXX other people. Not by actually being abor to read their mind, but by listening to what they say. The simplest way to read a person's mind is to listen to his speech. How do you spe&1 speech? That's how you spell peach, isn't it? Now look, analyze the man's conversation like this, and it's good to analyze our own conversation this way. We want to read what's in his mind. What's the object of his conversation? What's his manner of expression? How's he doing it? What areas of interest do you see him display as he speaks? How

precise is he? Let's write that precision of his thoughts XXX what he expresses. How precise is he? Does he use a lot of words to beat around the bush, and can't seem to get to the point? What grasp does he seem to have of the ideas? that are XXXXX coming out of his mouth? What do you think his store of knowledge is, from what he says? And finally, if you observe the person a lot, do his words agree or comincide with what he does? Let's go through those again: What's the object of his conversation? Why is he speaking? Is he just youknow, lot's of people can just be loudmouths. Their minds are never in bear with their mounts, mouths, it's just running. The mouth is running. What's the manner of the expression. Well, sloppy in speech, dignified? The manner might vary you know, depending on what you were trying to accomplish, but it can reflect certainly, something about the mind of the person who is speaking. What are his areas of interest? Is he always talking about sex? Is that the only thing on his mind? Or does he have something else you know. Are his interests wide, are they important, or are they just grivial? How precise does he express himself? Does his mind seem to be working in a precise manner? How well does he grasp the ideas? What's his background in knowledge? What's he got up there to be talking with? And then finally, and you've heard this a million times, do his words

agree with WKXXXX what he's doing?

WKKKK Who is this brother up here? (L. Tom Perry, No --- Gordon B Hinkley.) That's Gordon B. Hinkley. I just thrill, as I'm sure you do at conference timewhen you hear some of these bretheren talk. I just know in my heart when I hear such bretheren as Gordon B. Hinkley and others, that they are truly prophets of the Lord. And these vulgarity and such , but they meet the test on these questions. And not only that, they're good men, they live the commandments, and the Spirit of the Lord is with them in their speech, particularly at Conference time. You must feel it. I think all of us have our favorites among speakers when conference comes around, I have several, but this man is one of them. When he speaks, I just thrill, because ;his speech seems so precise, and he has such a grasp of the ideas and a store of knowledge -all these t ings, they're just there -- every one of them. And then the spirit of the Lord is with him at the same time. And that's the thing that we need to strive for in our lives, is to have the XXXXX situation where we have the backbround, we've removed all the unclean ideas, and the foul speech from our that's and we can have the Spirit of the Lord with us as we speak. (Bfother Hall . . .) OK, Rob, Are you kind of

saying in effect that we can have \_\_\_\_\_\_J Golden?????????

You know, there's a little legend there. I have a conference speech of J. Golden Kimball's here, there's hot a single swear word in there. Bishop. . . "I think there comes a time when a person grows up with some of these habits of swearing when they become WWKKX automatic expressions with no significance to that person. Originally, I think we all use them for effect. We use words, inappropriate words to achieve a specific effect. there comes a time, when they no longer function like that for a person. It's simply habit. Now, it's a crude habit that offends, and Brother Kimball literally offended when he used this language. I have Brother Cheney's book on J. Golden Kimball, and there are places in there where he recognizes he gives offense withthis speech. But he also recognizes that it has become such a part of him that it's very difficult cor him to even be aware that he's using it. I think that perhaps when it comes to this point, for some, under certain circumstances, some of these expressions will not necessarily KXXX hamper their spirituality. At least, not to the point where they can't function as servants of the Lord. They will make them less effective as servants of the Lord, no matter what; but this swearing thing occurs on a variety of levels, I guess is what I'm

Saying. For Brother Kimball, I EXMENSIBLEMENTAL STREAM THANK SHENDER THANK THE STREAM THANK THE STREAM THANK THE STREAM THANK THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WITH him many gimes, even when he used some of this language. On the other hand, most people recognize, as he recognized, that it was habit that led him to use this speech—not effect. And in you so yousee some sort of difference here ENEX perhaps the way WE might use it as 18, 20, 25 year olds and the way Brother Kimball might have used it as a 75 year old member of the General Authorities." Brother Sheffield. . . . "I was wondering if in your lesson last week you mentioned the (statement?) of President Kimball on this subject?

"No, do you have a quote?"

"Well, I just wrote it down . . . . I think it's quite accurate.

"Profanity is the attempt of the feeble mind to express itself, " that's what President Kimball said in October. Pretty strong.

(Brother Baird. Yea, and I think we need to realize too, that many of these bretheren, early members of the church, some of the General Authorites were not the spiritual giants that we have in the Church today. You see this evidenced in the number XX that were excommunicated from the church. These were men whose background's so heavily influenced them that they couldn't achéeve the leves of

spirituality that they might have otherwise achieved .-----

Well, thank you bretheren, for your comments. Now, in the field of language and improving ourselves, we have already mentioned vocabulary, and we should have an interest in expanding our vocabulary. Back to Rob, I know some of you guys, in jest call him Webster, Well, I hope he's not offended by ht, he does have a good vocabularly, I recognize that, that's a good thing. It's a recognition really, when they call you Webster

Well, all of us, when we speak have mannerisms and some of these are bad. Most XX university professors have them and the kids pick them out like that. We're not fully aware of them. We twiddle our chalk, and we doall kinds of things. That's XX just the way we speak. We have our mannerisms. Now when you're young is the time to try and get those out. When you're the age of some of the rest of us, it's too late. Sometimes the interesting things that are flattering about your mannerisms-people have been telling me for over twenty-vive years that I talk like Jimmy Steward. Now I've never had any of you tell me that, but I hear that constantly. (They just don't know who Jimmy Stewart is.) I guess that's it. He's as old as I am. But that's a mannerism that I have and I'm glad I have. It's interesting, sometime I'll just open my

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and get out two cents and somebody will just interrupt me "you talk like Jimmy Stewart." My wife says it's not true, but there must be something you see in his mannerisms and mine that are a little bit similar. For years and years I'll hear that, several times every year.

There are some words that might be worth trying to define. the subject of We're again a little bit on the negative side of speech, but I'd like to have some Xyou fellows define some of these words for me. Just what is profanity? The word profanity. What does that mean? What's that again, Brother Garn? To abase something holy. Well, I think we might use that as a definition. There might be others alittle closer to it. Definitions you know, are always just approximate. The word profane is related to the word profanity. What would you say ; the word profane was? Bishop, what would you say profane was? The dictionary says it's a contempt for the Savior. Well, how about blasphemy? What is it to blaspheme? What's blasphemy? Brother Brown, What's blasphemy? (To make light of spiritual things or God) I think that's exactly right. Webster. Well, Webster makes it just a little XXXX bit tougher than You said it, but it's the same idea. He says it's cursing or XXXXXXX reviléing God. Blasphemy, to curse God or revile God. What about vanity?