

SPEECHES OF THE



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THE LAW OF THE HARVEST:
AS A MAN SOWS, SO SHALL HE REAP

ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER

March 8, 1966

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

THE LAW OF THE HARVEST: AS A MAN SOWS, SO SHALL HE REAP

AN ADDRESS GIVEN TO THE BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY STUDENT BODY

ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER
Member of the Council of the Twelve
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

with an introduction by
President Ernest L. Wilkinson

March 8, 1966

PRESIDENT ERNEST L. WILKINSON

Elder Howard W. Hunter, our speaker this morning, was born in Boise, Idaho, where he obtained his elementary and secondary education. He then attended the University of Washington. At the age of 21 he moved to California with his family.

In 1931 he married Clara May Jeffs in the Salt Lake Temple. Then during the depression years he decided that he needed more education. So with two children and a full-time job, he attended Southwestern University in Los Angeles to study law. His daily schedule consisted of getting up and starting to study at 5:00 A.M., going to work during the day, attending classes during the evening, working all day Saturdays, finally graduating with a degree in law, cum laude, becoming a very prominent practicing lawyer and businessman in Los Angeles.

He served as a bishop, a stake president, chairman of the Southern California Welfare Region, and has been a member of the Council of the Twelve since 1959.

His two sons have both received their bachelor's degrees from this institution, one of them also his master's degree. While they are both practicing law in California at the present time, he says one is still going to come back and obtain a master's degree from this institution.

We are very happy to introduce to you at this time Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of this institution.

ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER

My dear brothers and sisters, what an inspiration and thrill it is to be with you on this occasion. I congratulate you on your desire for an hour of worship in the midst of your classes and studies. I commend you for your

devotion to the gospel and the Church which is so vital to the establishment of Zion, a society of the pure in heart, and for the advancement of the kingdom of God on the earth.

I approach my responsibility today with a sense of inadequacy and with a great desire for the blessings of the Lord. Will you share this responsibility with me? Will each of you offer a silent prayer within your heart that the Lord will inspire us today? If you will sincerely do so, and hunger and thirst for truth and righteousness and yearn for the understanding of the Spirit, I assure you that our prayers will be answered.

The Learning Process Lies Within You

Over 50 years ago a wealthy captain of industry was approached by representatives of Harvard University for a substantial contribution in cash to help establish and build a graduate school of business. At first this prominent industrial leader hesitated to contribute, until he was persuaded in his own mind of the worth and importance of this educational enterprise. Once convinced, he contributed many times more than what was initially requested of him.

As they were preparing for the dedicatory services they asked this great benefactor to make a speech. He declined. They tried to prevail, but again he declined. When the dedicatory services were being held, they again persisted and asked him if he would say but a few words on this important occasion. He stood before the assembly and essentially said: "I have but one thing I would like to say to you today, to the leaders and faculty and to the students of this business school . . ." Then after a long pause he said: "The learning process lies within."

In these five words, "The learning process lies within," is contained a wise and profound truth--a truth which to my understanding has helped shape the objectives and the methods of that great school of business for over a half century.

Responsibility for Education Is Yours

Beloved students, the learning process does lie within. The primary responsibility for your education here at Brigham Young University is yours. It is not the Church's; it is not the administrators' responsibility; it is not even your teachers'--it is yours. To the degree you accept this responsibility and are diligent in discharging it, you will succeed, you will grow and develop an educated mind and an educated heart. As you are true to the laws of God you will develop a divine character.

To the degree that you do not accept this responsibility you will not grow and develop within. If you should "make it through school," rather

than obtain an education, you will receive only a diploma. This diploma may open certain doors of opportunity to begin with, but it will not keep them open. These doors of opportunity will only stay open if you truly become educated and grow and develop from within.

Resources and Opportunities

What does it mean to be responsible for your own education? It essentially means this: You realize fundamentally that your learning, your growth and development are based upon your own efforts. The teachers become a great resource for you--they represent a reservoir of knowledge; they stimulate your thoughts; they challenge your ideas, your concepts. They help you gain new ones; they give you abundant opportunities for self-expression, for the development of your communication skills.

The library is also a resource, as are your textbooks and your fellow students. The whole atmosphere is conducive to learning. Grasp this opportunity. You may never be surrounded by more helps, more advantages and more opportunities in your entire life than you are right now.

You remember the essay of Elbert Hubbard, entitled "A Message to Garcia." Let me read part of it.

When the war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was necessary to communicate quickly with the leaders of the Insurgents. Garcia was somewhere in the mountain fastnesses of Cuba--no one knew where. No mail nor telegraph message could reach him. The President must secure his cooperation and quickly.

Someone said to the President, "There is a fellow by the name of Rowan who will find Garcia for you, if anyone can." Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia.

How the "fellow by the name of Rowan" took the letter, sealed it up in an oil-skin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the Island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia--are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail. The point that I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, "Where is he?"

A Test

Students, put this matter to a test. Suppose you are teaching a class. You give to your students an assignment for Friday after next to hand in an essay describing the essential elements of the President's proposed national budget, giving their best over-all evaluation of it.

Will your students say, "Yes, sir," and then go to the task and on Friday next, eleven days from today, hand in the finished assignment? Or will they come to you individually and ask: "Where can I find the President's budget?" "Where is the information found? In magazines or books?" "What part of the library?" "What is the budget, anyway?" "Which President do you mean?" "What do you mean by 'evaluation'?"

Assume you have answered these questions. What, then, will happen Friday next? Will the assignments be handed in? By how many? Will there be some excuses such as: "Couldn't get hold of the book--someone kept it out of the library too long," or "I didn't quite understand what you meant when you gave the assignment," or "I just simply didn't have enough time--can I hand it in late?"

Let us return to Elbert Hubbard's closing paragraph:

My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the "boss" is away, as well as when he is at home. And the man, who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive, without any idiotic questions, and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing aught else but deliver it, never gets "laid off," nor has to go on a strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted. He is wanted in every city, town, and village--in every office, shop, store and factory. The world cries out for such: he is needed, and needed badly--the man who can carry a message to Garcia.

A True Story

To further illustrate the importance of accepting the responsibilities for your own education, I tell you a true story of a friend of mine as he learned this vital lesson the hard way.

In my friend's university training, not here at the "Y," he became "caught up" in an exciting new social life. He could fairly easily handle the academic side for he had a good mind and was capable of concentrating and memorizing under pressure.

His objective in university life was to get a degree and "have a lot of fun" in the process. He learned a short cut in getting what he wanted. Rather than paying the daily price of conscientious study and preparation for his classes, he learned to concentrate in his classes and to take thorough, exhaustive notes. He seldom bought textbooks, let alone read them. His preparation for his tests involved intensive cramming sessions in which he would summarize all of his notes and essentially memorize the summary. Like the open hungry sponge he would sop up all of the knowledge he could by cramming and then would squeeze it and squeeze it on the blue books until it was completely dry.

Using this "clever" study philosophy he consistently received good grades; in fact, he graduated from that university with honors, which, incidentally, reflects badly on both himself and the university. His goal was accomplished--he received his degree and had a lot of fun in the process.

He went on to graduate school. Then something happened. This school cared but little for knowledge alone and cared even less for a student's ability to memorize and regurgitate. My friend was overwhelmed. Competition was stiff. The other students seemed far more informed than he; they seemed to be able to think more clearly, to analyze, and to create. They could communicate in a more organized, clear, and persuasive fashion. The school emphasized thinking and decision-making and the power to communicate.

My friend said to himself, "What have I done? I have deceived myself. My old short-cut techniques won't work here. What can I do now?" For some time he tried to shift the responsibility; he wanted to excuse himself. He blamed his alma mater, his teachers, and then in honesty--himself.

It was a bitter pill he had to swallow. His classes demanded more than he could deliver. In his frustration he got his trained, self-disciplined roommate to do part of his work--the hard part. But his roommate couldn't help him on his tests. Soon each day became a test, and for the first time in his life he faced real failure.

The Law of the Harvest

He learned the truth of the Law of the Harvest: As a Man Sows, So Shall He Reap. Little by little he had to unlearn his lazy school habits and learn new habits of diligence and perseverance and self-reliance. Eventually, by paying the price of long, late hours, mental sweat, and continuous struggling for over two years, he was able to undo his past self-deceiving error and achieve a real success. He now attributes his real formal education to those two years.

Immutable Laws

The laws governing mental or social or spiritual development are as immutable and unswerving in their spheres as are the laws governing physical development. This coming week our great basketball team will make a bid for victory at the National Invitational Tournament in New York. Rather than conscientiously practicing basketball every day, what would happen if our team just took it easy, took the course of least resistance, and then the day before the basketball tournament really crammed in an intensive practice session? The foolishness of this is transparent.

Likewise, it is a foolish thing, a self-deceiving thing, to attempt to reap success to any endeavor by cramming or by any short-cut method. You cannot force the physical growth process overnight; neither can you force the mental growth process. People grow mentally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually only to the degree they obey on a daily basis the laws governing such growth.

The Lord tells us this clearly and powerfully:

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated--

And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.
(D&C 130:20-21.)

"Every Act Rewards Itself . . ."

Many consider Ralph Waldo Emerson one of the wisest Americans. He discovered in his own way the truth that all blessings are predicated on obedience to both natural and spiritual law. His expression is very profound, so you must listen very carefully:

. . . Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. . . .

Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner, first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Man calls the circumstance, the retribution. The casual retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific

stripes may follow late after the offence, but they follow because they accompany it. . . .

I wish time would permit us to study this great essay.

Nations Also Subject to Basic Principles

My fellow students, what is true with an individual is also true with a nation. You can absolutely rely on this--a nation cannot violate basic principles with impunity, that is, without paying the awful price, anymore than an individual can violate basic principles with impunity.

We hear a lot of economic and political arguments going on around the country today. We have for a long time. Words like "socialism," "free enterprise," "the welfare state," "states rights," "federal control," "human rights," "property rights," "communism," are bantered around widely. You may wonder what these words mean. I wonder myself because they are used with such varieties of meaning. Often in your search to understand them you run into a barrage of more such words and even prejudice and bull-headedness, and you come out of the fray more confused and more frustrated. I believe much of this can be simplified.

There is operating in your own daily life here at Brigham Young University the basic principles which lie at the heart of all of these arguments, words, and issues.

Socialism and the United Order Compared

Last week you were given a great message by Elder Marion G. Romney which was inspiring and profound. He compared socialism with the United Order. I encourage you to study carefully that message. He gave much of the basic theory, the principles, the similarities and the differences between these two basically conflicting systems. As I accept his premises, logic, and conclusions, with your permission, at this time, I would like to use his message as a springboard for my own. The basic principle in his message is the same principle in mine, as already discussed--the principle of the Law of the Harvest--As a Man Sows, So Shall He Reap.

From my own experience in business and as a lawyer and church worker, and from my firsthand observations in this country and other countries of the world, there appears to me to be a trend to shift responsibility for life and its processes from the individual to the state. In this shift there is a basic violation of the Law of the Harvest, or the law of justice. The attitude of "something for nothing" is encouraged. The government is often looked to as the source of wealth. There is the feeling that the government should step in and take care of one's needs, one's emergencies, and one's future.

Just as my friend actually became a slave to his own ignorance and bad habits by refusing to accept the responsibility for his own education and moral growth, so, also, can an entire people be imperceptibly transferred from individuals, families, and communities to the Federal Government.

Right of Free Agency

The right to own and control private property is not only a human right; it is a divine right. We will largely be judged, if I understand the Savior's teachings correctly (see Matthew 25), by how we use our property voluntarily for the blessings and benefit of our Father's other children. President McKay continually teaches us that this right of free agency is our most precious heritage. It is our greatest gift in this world and is to be valued even more than life itself.

If you deprive a man of his right to fail in the righteous use of his property, you also deprive him of his right to succeed. If you remove from a man his right to "go to hell," you likewise remove his free agency to go to heaven. Satan's entire philosophy is based on a "something for nothing" philosophy: salvation without effort--a free gift. This counterfeit doctrine was rejected by God our Father. Our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, accepted our Father's plan and agreed to pay the infinite price to become our Savior and Redeemer and to show us the way back to the Father. The way is often the hard way. It is the Law of the Harvest. It is the same basic law in the spiritual realm which the farmer must obey in the physical realm. He plants in the spring and cultivates, waters, weeds, and nourishes the ground and its new life and then harvests in the fall.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ Restored

Christianity in its fulness and truth has been restored to the earth by direct revelation. The restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the most significant fact since the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What was restored? In a very real sense, the true Law of the Harvest was restored--the law of justice, the law of mercy, the law of love. It was restored in a free country under the influence of a God-inspired Constitution which created a climate of freedom, opportunity and prosperity. The basic virtues of thrift, self-reliance, independence, enterprise, diligence, integrity, morality, faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, were the principles upon which this, the greatest nation in the world, has been built. We must not sell this priceless, divine heritage which was largely paid for by the blood of patriots and prophets for a mess of pottage, for a counterfeit, a false doctrine parading under the cloak of love and compassion, of humanitarianism, even of Christianity.

Working on the Roots of Prosperity

Under a free enterprise economy, little more than 6 per cent of the population has produced nearly half of the world's goods. We can today best wage a war on poverty by working on the roots of prosperity, not by sapping their vital strength. To sap the self-reliant spirit of enterprising independent souls in the development of a welfare state can bring only "poverty equally divided." When the responsibility for their own welfare is completely shifted from the shoulders of individuals and families to the state, a lethal blow is struck at both the roots of our prosperity and our moral growth.

What is the real cause of this trend toward the welfare state, toward more socialism? In the last analysis, in my judgment, it is personal unrighteousness. When people do not use their freedoms responsibly and righteously, they will gradually lose these freedoms.

Let me illustrate: If I, as an employer, in my policies and practices exploit my employees, I will either lose them and my business, or my employees will gather together and threaten to strike me. They will strive to exercise an influence on the legislative process so that laws will be enacted dictating fair employment policies and practices, thus limiting my freedom to determine these things for myself.

If man will not recognize the inequalities around him and voluntarily, through the gospel plan, come to the aid of his brother, as outlined by Brother Romney, he will find that through "a democratic process" he will be forced to come to the aid of his brother. The government will take from the "haves" and give to the "have nots." Both have lost their freedom. Those who "have," lost their freedom to give voluntarily of their own free will and in the way they desire. Those who "have not," lost their freedom because they did not earn what they received. They got "something for nothing," and they will neither appreciate the gift nor the giver of the gift.

Vital Freedoms Endangered

Under this climate, people gradually become blind to what has happened and to the vital freedoms which they have lost--just as my friend, the student, was blind to what was really happening as he took the short-cut route through school, until one day he was caught up in a new reality, demanding far more than he was prepared to deliver.

Let me remind you of the first thing Cain said after he murdered Abel. In his blind fury and hatred and envy of his brother, he swore to himself and to Satan in secret that he would kill his brother because Abel's offering in righteousness was accepted by the Lord where his own was not. Listen carefully:

And Cain went into the field, and Cain talked with Abel, his brother. And it came to pass that while they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him.

And Cain gloried in that which he had done, saying: [Now listen to this.] I am free; surely the flocks of my brother falleth into my hands.

And the Lord said unto Cain: Where is Abel, thy brother? And he said: I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? (Moses 5:32-34.)

Cain said that he was free. How deceived he was. In fact, he became a slave.

A thief takes something and gives nothing. He thinks he is free, but sooner or later his freedom vanishes into walls and bars. Likewise, a person becomes a thief of his own soul by deceiving himself that he can live unrighteously, immorally, that he can cheat, lie, and take advantage of his neighbor; but all the while he is imprisoning himself behind bars and walls of his own making. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." (Galatians 6:7.)

Freedom Through Personal Righteousness

Dear students, the only way we can keep our freedom is through our personal righteousness--by handling that freedom responsibly. We are our brother's keeper. We must be concerned for the social problems of today. We must take that responsibility upon ourselves according to the gospel plan but not according to the socialistic plan.

You know that it is vain and foolish for a doctor to criticize the symptoms of a disease and refuse to work upon the roots. So, also, it is superficial to only criticize socialism and the welfare state and the many other evil "isms" growing up among us unless we work upon the roots. Thousands of you here have served missions. You worked upon the roots. It is only in the changing of a man's heart--a second birth--the changing of an individual, that the root strength comes to change a people or a nation.

Righteousness, Responsibility, Freedom

I sincerely hope that the net effect of this message this morning is that each of us, each of you, will be ever more determined to live righteously. Why? Because righteousness and freedom are inseparable, just as responsibility and freedom are inseparable.

If you are dishonest in your dealings, if you cheat in your examinations, you are sowing the seeds of slavery and you will reap that harvest even though you might rationalize to yourself, "I am free." If you are involved

in necking and petting and immoral practices, you are becoming enslaved to your own passions and appetites, even though in your self-justifying pride you may say, "I am free." If you, yourself, resist these satanic temptations and determine to pay the daily price, to live the Law of the Harvest by clean, moral thoughts and practices, by upright, honest dealings, by integrity and conscientiousness in your studies, by fasting, prayer and worship, you will reap the harvest of freedom and inner peace and prosperity.

What Can We Do Now?

What can you do here and now? First, resolve to live the Law of the Harvest and realize that this will involve a price, and with some that price will be very, very heavy. Then go to work, resisting temptation, overcoming bad habits, and developing the good habits of an upright character, and be a diligent student. A wise educator and leader, William George Jordan, beautifully describes this process of acquiring self-control:

It is only the progressive installment plan Nature recognizes. No man can make a habit in a moment or break it in a moment. It is a matter of development, of growth. But at any moment man may begin to make or begin to break any habit. This view of the growth of character should be a mighty stimulus to the man who sincerely desires and determines to live nearer to the limit of his possibilities.

Like the light set on a hill, like the leaven of a loaf, you will influence for good our entire country and help preserve this great Republic and its inspired Constitution and its great climate of freedom.

The Real Issue Is Righteousness

God will preserve our country and protect it from all enemies, within and without, if we will worship the God of this land, who is Jesus Christ. The real issue is righteousness. We must not pray, as did Augustine, "O God, make me clean, but not yet."

I witness that Jesus Christ lives, that He is the Author of freedom and the perfect exemplar of the Law of the Harvest.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (Galatians 6:7.)

We love you and believe in you, and in a very real measure we entrust the future of our country and great Church into your worthy hands. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.