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A COUNSELLING PROBLEM IN THE CHURCH

by

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Address to Seminary and Institute of Religion Faculty
Based upon a similar discourse to a group of L. D. S. Psychiatrists
Brigham Young University
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My beloved brethren who teach the youth of Zion:

What a glorious responsibility and opportunity you have to work with youth for their clay is still moldable and you can make permanent impressions upon them. Brethren, I pay tribute to you. I express my affection for you and confidence in you. I am grateful to the Lord that we have men of your capability and devotion to stand before our young people and give them example and teach them the way of life.

As I have interviewed numerous prospective missionaries, I have been impressed constantly by their expressions of confidence and faith in their Seminary teachers and Institute directors. Numerous young men have filled missions because of inspiration from you. There are numerous people in high places in Church positions who received their inspiration from you. So, again, we pay tribute to you and commend you and encourage you to go forward. Your efforts are rewarding and meaningful even though sometimes the students seem listless and unresponsive.

Again, I have been impressed with the strength and stature and devotion and faith of you good folks as a class and not infrequently do we call from your number stake presidencies, high councilors, bishoprics and others for important places.

I should like to be helpful here today. I pray that what I may say will assist you in your work.

In the excellent training you have received, you have been advised that your responsibility is in teaching and warning and counseling by reason of your calling in the educational program. As such spiritual trainers, you are not administrators with ecclesiastical authority, however, many of you, as stated above, are ecclesiastical leaders and serve in dual capacities.

With my understanding of your work as instructors in Seminary and Institute, I feel that you are probably closest to the bishops and can help most with their work. Your service lies in the preventive field perhaps more than in the cure area. Youth comes into the Seminary program when most of them are clean and pure and undefiled. At least we hope that most of them are naive and unschooled in the ugly things which beset the young people in their middle teens. Hence a program

of indoctrination properly carried out can do much in the preventive field and keep the boys and girls clean and wholesome and free from the sins of the world. As the youth begin to learn from their contemporaries, the many distasteful things they will have been fortified and immunized and will be safe from the vicious cesspools of filth and contamination.

As the young people work up through the four years of Seminary, most of them could enter college and the Institute free and clean, but should any have partaken of the world in those first four years, then the Institute may continue the work of prevention and indoctrination and also assist in the difficult task of the cure.

Here is the area where you may be of assistance to the Bishop and of inestimable value to the youth of Zion.

I have come to know the great faith and confidence which the youth generally have in their Seminary and Institute instructors. I have known numerous cases where the young people have confessed their blackest sins to their teacher in whom their confidence had been built up. The disciplinary action is not in the jurisdiction of the teacher but he can counsel and advise and possibly help the youth to make his adjustment with the right party and in the right way and thus get relief and peace.

Heavy responsibility lies on the shoulders of you great people. If your work is done well, you will have bolstered the bishop and made his work effective and telling.

Clean and high-minded youth will attend to their priesthood and auxiliary work. Inspired boys and girls will be youth missionaries and share their truths with their fellows; and attract the better class of their contemporaries to the Church and to the gospel; well-trained young folks will have been stirred in their ambition and will excel in their academic work; practically all lofty-minded young men and some young women will fill honorable and productive missions; nearly all these well-taught young people will finally be married over temple altars and the future will see such young married people tomorrow with their arms full of little children and they will be carrying on much of the community and public work because of their superiority and they will be the breastwork of the organization of the Church and the kingdom.

Such is my vision of the potential of the Seminary and Institute men. Your opportunity is near unlimited. The auxiliaries have the youth for short irregular limited hours. You have them for regular, precious hours. If your students are not actually a captured audience, at least you have a more controlled program.

In my stake conference meetings with the bishoprics and stake presidencies and high councils, I have insisted that if they would see that the young people attended the Seminaries and Institutes that you would almost guarantee their morality and worthiness and that they would fill missions, marry in the temple, and live beautiful L. D. S. lives.

If I have properly analyzed it, then you good people become perhaps the strongest and most dependable ally to the bishop and together generations of upright, clean, ambitious leaders will be developed and the kingdom will grow.

Now in addition to the preventive program suggested, the Institute and Seminary men will need to assist the bishop in the matter of cure at least until our program has become so effective that there will be few sick people needing medication. The Lord said:

"They that be whole need not a physician,
but they that are sick." Matthew 9:12

As of today, there are many sick among us--many who need strong healing medicine--many who are something like

"the certain woman which had an issue of
blood twelve years,...

And had suffered many things of many
physicians, and had spent all that she had, and
was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse...

When she had heard of Jesus, came in the
press behind, and touched his garment..." Mark 5:25-27

We believe the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, taken as a whole, are the best behaved, best adjusted and least disturbed of any people, yet we know that there are many mal-adjusted folks in the Church and it is our desire to do all we can in helping them to return to normal living and peace and joy and happiness. Though we hope to a lesser degree, we are also plagued with most of the problems of society in general: divorce, broken homes, delinquency, and their usual cause, sin in its numerous manifestations.

We are saddened whenever we find even one member who has a distorted, unhappy life and we are eager to assist him to straighten up and be happy.

How they need help! And certainly you as a body of physicians can prescribe and help to cure.

There are many other physicians in the colleges, on the streets, in business places among us who have worsened the patients. They have laughed at the conventions; they have proclaimed a gospel of error; they have advanced the hellish doctrine that sexual promiscuity is not only allowable but beneficial and normal and proper.

Numerous times have I interviewed young men who have been told by people in whom they had confidence that masturbation was normal and natural and necessary. Numerous times have I visited with young people who have been advised to greatly limit their children. More than a few times have I been advised by frustrated people that they have been advised to seek promiscuous sexual life to cure their maladies.

And we feel to cry out with Jeremiah:

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Jeremiah 8:22

The Lord has given us a plan of life and if we fully follow it, the problems of the world will be solved. He has given to every member a bishop or branch president and a stake or mission president. For convenience, I shall use the titles bishop and president only. Some years ago, it was decided by the brethren to have no members 'at large' without affiliation but to attach each soul to a ward or branch to which he was nearest.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" asked Cain when caught in his criminal deed. We consider ourselves in the Church responsible for our member brothers.

A bishop is ordained with an everlasting endowment, and it is lost only through unworthiness which brings church discipline, even to excommunication. He is set apart as bishop of a ward to provide it leadership. He becomes the judge, spiritual adviser, inspirer, counselor, discipliner. He becomes by ordination and setting apart the father of his people and should know them individually by name and nature and weakness and strength. He should foresee and forestall possible problems and if some develop, be able and ready to help in their solution. His ward family should be his enlarged family and receive the same general interest as his own flesh and blood children.

Some of you are bishops and all of you should understand the work of bishops so that you may be able to cooperate and sustain and bolster the bishop in his work with the people with whom you both are serving. Paul said to Timothy:

"This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." I Timothy 3:1-7

By virtue of his call and ordination and setting apart, he also becomes a 'judge in Israel' and has the responsibility of making many decisions which affect the progress and development of his people. He gives direction to their spiritual activities so that he can give them opportunities for growth; and judge their accomplishments. He decides as to their worthiness and eligibility for certain blessings and privileges. He holds the key to all temples in the world and it is he who must turn that key to open the doors thereof and that they may go through eternal marriage to life eternal.

He has the keys to the storehouses and must decide if one is eligible through need and worthiness to be given welfare assistance.

Technically, this is not a lay church for all its men and boys over twelve and most of its women and older girls may serve in important capacities. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints calls its ecclesiastical priesthood and auxiliary leaders to serve and gives them no compensation for their Church work, but each makes his own living. The few exceptions are those in the top councils whose entire time is given to Church service and who receive no salary but a living allowance.

Some months ago at the request of some Latter-day Saint psychiatrists, I addressed them concerning the program of the Church with regard to transgressors and how the Church seeks first to avoid delinquencies; and second, how to discipline those who are in trouble; and third, how to cure them and help them to become honorable and faithful citizens and leaders in the Lord's Kingdom.

With your permission, I may quote rather liberally from that address:

Many churches have seminaries where their leaders are trained for the ministry, but in the Church of Jesus Christ, the leaders have no formal academic training for their positions but gain experience through their life time and they depend much upon the spirit for guidance. Accordingly, no man is specifically trained to be a bishop except as his priesthood work from twelve years on up, his auxiliary work, and his numerous opportunities in leadership fit him for that work. Consequently, it could be stated that our thousands of bishops are not formally and technically trained.

It is not uncommon to find the spiritual leader of a ward earning his own livelihood in a trench with plumber tools, on the farm with his cows and pigs, in a bank at the teller's window or at an administrator's desk. He may be the custodian for the school or its principal or president. The bishop may be collecting garbage or delivering mail, a policeman, a painter, a teacher, a merchant, a retired capitalist.

We are a peculiar people and do things differently. Peter said, "It is a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation". We have an unique organization and unusual ways quite unlike most contemporary churches.

This church supplies, as perhaps no other organization in the world does, on-the-job training and most all the leaders in the Church have grown in their sufficiency in their leadership through experience. You were likely professionally trained for your teaching work, but for your work on the high council, in the bishopric or stake presidency, you likely developed your present skill through experience in the Church's efficient ON THE JOB training school.

Numerous suggestions have come from many sources in the years past that the bishops should be trained in the social work to be able to meet the demands of the people in their numerous needs. But the brethren have never felt that would be the answer.

It is said: "God's ways are not man's ways." This man, the bishop, need not be schooled in all fields of education for he has access to the fountain of all knowledge. There is revelation in the Church, not only for the Prophet but for every worthy and righteous man. The individual is entitled to divine guidance in his own life and that of his family; the bishop is entitled to revelation for himself, his family, and his ward; the stake president is entitled to revelation for himself, his family and his stake; and, of course, the President of the Church is entitled to divine guidance for himself, his family and the entire Church and the entire world. It must be remembered that these revelations will always parallel the established program and perhaps amplify but never counter, for the Lord is the author of harmony and peace and not of contention and conflict.

Accordingly, bishops may lack much in formal training or they may be specialists high in academic circles. But both will succeed in proportion to their dependence on Divine guidance and their humility, industry, love and consecration.

I have been amazed on numerous occasions when I have joined with a bishop in a serious problem of a ward member to see the sagacity, wisdom, inspiration and judgment which some of these young bishops display in their handling of most perplexing problems of members.

We should say here that all these leaders are human beings. They have grown up with their fellows with neither specialized training nor ambition to secure a position as bishop. They accept such a demanding role not because they crave it, but because of their faith, having the feeling of consecration and the need of accepting service when called by proper authority.

It would be unrealistic and untrue to state that all these young men are perfect men or perfect bishops. They are mortals subject to the whims and weaknesses common to their fellows. They are not all as wise as Solomon. They are not all as personable as President McKay. They are not all as kind as President George Albert Smith was but as I have known thousands of them personally through a half century and more, I am astounded at the power and strength and dignity and goodness and ability of these young men. An occasional one must be replaced for improper conduct or for inability to measure up, but the great majority are most impressive. Stand these personalities up in their cloak of authority, and it would be difficult to get a comparable group of like

numbers anywhere who would be so striking. I am dwelling upon the bishop since so much of the personality work depends upon him. The branch presidents are in a similar position with similar authority but a little farther removed from some of the detail.

Now the bishop is a man of varied responsibilities and of many duties. He visits the 'fatherless and the widows'; he blesses the sick; he buries the dead; he calls to responsibility; he appoints and releases; he conducts meetings and supervises all the numerous activities in the ward; he counsels, advises, calls to repentance, disciplines and sometimes must handle people for their fellowship and membership. He is called of God and promised divine guidance and he will be led to make right decisions and follow proper courses if he is in total attunement with the Lord.

Therefore, the bishop may draw on this limitless reservoir of knowledge and wisdom. His source inspiration is the Master Physician, the Master Psychiatrist, the Master Psychologist; he is not likely to get far astray if he is humble and 'on the beam'.

The Church finds times and situations when the trained psychiatrist has been called in for special assistance and several doctors in that field have responded most generously.

But the Lord says:

"And unto the bishop of the church, and unto such as God shall appoint and ordain to watch over the church and to be elders unto the church, are to have it given unto them to discern all those gifts lest there shall be any among you professing and yet be not of God. "

"And it shall come to pass that he that asketh in Spirit shall receive in Spirit. " D & C 46:27-28

Numerous stories could be told of situations where the bishops have discerned transgression without any report and have 'nipped it in the bud' and saved more difficult situations.

The Lord has repeatedly emphasized that He will have a tried and true and good people. The second Article of Faith says:

"We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression. "

And the Lord repeats numerous times that men must repent or perish, so the bishop will first try to keep his people worthy; and second, to cure the ills and cleanse the filthy and reform the transgressor. Since there are only two named sins which are unpardonable, all others seem to be in the forgiveable area and the bishop may, therefore, represent the Church in waiving penalties for one who truly repents. This places a great responsibility upon the bishop. He makes no claim to be able to absolve sins. He waives penalties and permits activity and this is frequently called forgiveness.

Now, as indicated above, in spite of all our preventive work, we still have too many delinquents, too much sin, too many divorces, too many marital problems and too many transgressions and a bishop's work is a demanding one with many heartaches but many rewards.

Men have free agency as the Lord has made clear. They may do right or wrong but they cannot escape the responsibility of answering for their errors if they are normal individuals.

God's Church must curb sin and eliminate it so far as possible. When people know right from wrong and find themselves in the broad way to destruction, they have two ways to go. They may repent and cleanse themselves and obtain eventual peace and joy, or they may rationalize and excuse themselves and try the "escape" road. Those who follow the latter road sometimes so completely rationalize that they become calloused and lose the desire to repent until the Spirit of God ceases to strive with them. Those who choose to meet the issue, and transform their lives, find it the harder road at first but the more desirable one in the end.

The Gospel is a CAN program, not a CAN'T one. Gospel living is the WAY TO PERFECTION. We hear the scripture ringing: "Physician heal thyself" and know that every man must cure himself but he sometimes needs help and encouragement.

Man may choose his own path as the Lord said unto Enoch: "Say unto this people: Choose ye this day to serve the Lord God who made you." Moses 6:33

He continues:

"And it is given unto them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves, and I have given unto you another law and commandment.

Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous judge, who shall come in the meridian of time." Moses 6:56-57

And in a revelation to Joseph Smith in the presence of six elders in 1830, the Lord said:

"Behold, I gave unto him (every man) that he should be an agent unto himself. . . ."

And to the Nephites in ancient America, the prophet Lehi said:

"Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself." 2 Nephi 2:27

And again Jacob says:

"Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves--to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life." 2 Nephi 10:23

And from Helamen 14:31

"He hath given unto you that ye might know good from evil, and he hath given unto you that ye might choose life or death; and ye can do good and be restored unto that which is good, or have that which is good restored unto you; or ye can do evil, and have that which is evil restored unto you."

Our program--the Lord's program--is one of persuasion not force but if the transgressor refuses to repent, then he should be disciplined sometimes even to excommunication.

In the Lord's own way, we try to impress upon the transgressors:

"They themselves are makers of themselves."

and that:

"...mind is the master-weaver, both of the inner garment of character and the outer garment of circumstance, and as they may have hitherto woven in ignorance and pain, they may now weave in enlightenment and happiness." --James Allen, As A Man Thinketh

and also:

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he...a man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts."

These thoughts and the following come from James Allen from his book, "As A Man Thinketh."

"As the plant springs from, and could not be without the seed, so every act of a man springs from the hidden seeds of thought, and could not have appeared without them."

"Act is the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruits; thus does a man garner in the sweet and bitter fruitage of his own husbandry."

"Thought in the mind hath made us. What we are by thought was wrought and built. If a man's mind hath evil thoughts, pain comes on him as comes the wheel the ox behind..."

...If one endure in purity of thought, joy follows him as his own shadow--sure."

Again:

"Man is made or unmade by himself; in the armory of thought, he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself; he also fashions the tools with which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy and strength and peace. By the right choice joy and true application of thought, man ascends to the divine perfection; by the abuse and wrong application of thought, he descends below the level of the beasts. Between these two extremes are all the grades of character, and man is their maker and master."

Again:

"Man is always the master, even in his weakest and most abandoned state; but in his weakness and degradation, he is the foolish master who mis-governs his household....
(or) he becomes the wise master, directing his energies with intelligence and fashioning his thoughts to fruitful issues."

"Let a man radically alter his thoughts, and he will be astounded at the rapid transformation it will effect in the material conditions of his life..."

The Church teaches:

"But of the fruit of the tree which thou beholdest in the midst of the garden, God hath said--Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

"And the serpent said unto the woman: Ye shall not surely die;" Moses 4:9-10

"Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I the Lord God had given him...I caused that he should be cast down."
Moses 4:3

"And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies. TO DECEIVE AND TO BLIND MEN AND TO LEAD THEM CAPTIVE AT HIS WILL, EVEN AS MANY AS WOULD NOT HEARKEN UNTO MY VOICE."

Repentance could well be divided into five areas. The transgressor will get his relief and peace (1) if he totally convicts himself and acknowledges his error to himself and to his Lord without shame or pretense, excuse, or self-justification; (2) if he totally abandons the transgression; (3) if he confesses it fully to his bishop in confidence; (4) if he makes what restitution is possible and (5) if he then changes his life to do the works and live the gospel. Numerous people have had heart-breaking experiences but have finally found peace along this path and have lived beautiful and satisfying and abundant lives from then on.

But if there is no repentance, then there must be discipline. The Lord indicates that even he cannot forgive people IN their sins but only FROM their sins.

"And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins." Alma 11:37

He says:

"Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, FOR NO UNCLEAN THING CAN DWELL THERE, or DWELL IN HIS PRESENCE..." Moses 6:57

He warns also:

"...my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not." D & C 29:17

and again:

"Therefore, I command you to repent--repent lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore--how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not.

"For behold, I, God have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

"But if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I;

"Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit--and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink." D & C 19:15-18

"And I command you that you preach naught but repentance..." D & C 19:21

Now, this program is effective in all the fields of error. It is necessary for the adulterer to cleanse his life as well as the home breaker, the coveter, the fornicator, the one who does necking and petting, the pervert and the law breaker in all areas.

May I say briefly that the success in all these fields has been gratifying. Numerous deteriorating marriages have been bolstered by the bishop and other church leaders; young people have been stopped in their petting; fornicators and adulterers have been changed into law abiding people and repentant worshippers; and perverts have been reclaimed.

Now in times past, many of us have dealt in some detail and with considerable emphasis on the most deplorable habits of youth which involve them in petting and allied sexual irregularities. And before proceeding to other fields, let us remind ourselves again of the seriousness of those immoralities. Perhaps no one in or out of the Church is in a better position than you Seminary and Institute men to help the bishop to combat this gross evil. In my experience, numerous fine young people who have been involved in ugly petting have salved their consciences and have rationalized that it was a mere indiscretion and not a sin or transgression. I am sure that they have known well in their hearts that it was evil and not merely an approach to sin for their hiding it and then revealing it only when impelled to do by conscience would indicate that they knew it was very wrong. However, these young people need to know positively that petting is sin. They should know it when their first temptation comes. Who better than this group of great leaders can develop this consciousness?

We need not tell you for you know well that fornication has its inception in the intimacies of the steady date and especially in the frequent and unchaperoned intimate dates of the very young. Hence, it follows that you can do your most effective work when there can be developed in the community a realization of the error of this dangerous practice, emphasizing it with the youth themselves, their parents, and their community and religious leaders.

It is certain that if all agencies together, and you among the foremost, could band together postponing the dating pattern, the sad heart-aches and scarred broken lives could be reduced if not eliminated.

Substitution seems to be the law of change. Accordingly, new, great emphasis could be placed on the group activities of the young teenagers and no dates at all. The boys and girls would have their good times under proper chaperonage and thus would satisfy to a large degree their desire to be together. They would be getting acquainted on a broad basis, intellectual, social, spiritual with numerous young people from whom they could select their companions for courting at a later date.

If a postponement of any dating could be universal among our church youth until middle teens and at least the later years of high school; then if steady dating could be held back until the years of college and if much of that social life in the late teens could be guided and inspired by the institutes, what an Utopia we should have found. The sweet fortified younger people would approach the courting program more mature, more sensible, with greater controls, and young men would go on their missions undefiled, and both young men and young women would approach the temple altars with clean hands and pure hearts.

What a glorious work can then be done by the Seminary and Institute teachers in the preventive field. And what a delightful partnership with the bishop who has the final responsibility!

Now having considered briefly the more commonly-discussed area of deviation from proper standards, I am persuaded to consider briefly another area of trouble which has been more in the background but which now is being written about in many magazines and is being brought out into the limelight. The group of psychiatrists mentioned above especially requested to know of our work with regard to certain unholy practices. They asked about those deviates called 'peeping toms', exhibitionists, homosexuals, and perverts in other areas.

Perhaps you can also be helpful in these areas as you indoctrinate in the preventive spiritual medicine.

When quite a number of men were being arrested for these ugly practices, the president called one of my colleagues and myself in and charged us with the responsibility of helping these people on a church level. Naturally, our work was limited largely to the Northern Utah area, though in a limited way we have helped some people afar through their bishops and stake presidents.

We immediately called into service a current bishop, a church official of wide experience who is a successful business man, who is a man of rare, good judgment and kindness. He has an office without a name on it, a telephone without a published number and his work is done on a confidential basis.

Our helper bishop and our program of rehabilitation are known now to the police, the courts and the judges who refer many cases directly. When cases come to us, we usually interview the person then refer him to our special assistant. In many cases, the offenders have been referred to him by judges on a probation basis.

Our associate is not a trained psychiatrist nor does he pretend to be a trained social worker, but he is a humble servant of the Lord applying to the cases love, understanding and righteous principles. His methods of helping in the cures might not pass a state board of professional examiners, but they seem to pass well with the offenders and with the Lord for there have been numerous cures.

Through the years, we have heard that homosexuality was an incurable disease but now many authorities agree that one is recoverable from its clutches. I quote from the Medical World News, June 5, 1964:

"... The effectiveness of therapy depends on the depth of entrenchment of the perversion, as well as the strength of the patient's desire to modify it."

This is the statement of the public health committee of the New York Academy of Medicine.

The same report says these deviates "are at least more open and obtrusive" than they were in the past. It states that these people are formally organized with a central office and a magazine of their own and that "They are determined to be accepted not as lawbreakers, sinners, or even as sick people, but as a different kind of people leading an acceptable kind of life." The committee quotes these deviates as claiming theirs is a 'noble, preferable way of life, and the perfect answer to the problem of population explosion.'

We are told that as far back as Henry the VIII, this vice was referred to as "THE ABOMINABLE AND DETESTABLE CRIME AGAINST NATURE," and some of our own statutes have followed that wording. Some authorities feel that it is nearly as prevalent among women as among men, though the latter is more in the open.

We know such a disease is curable. Men have come dejected, discouraged, embarrassed, near terrified and have gone out later full of confidence and faith in themselves, with self respect again, the confidence of their families, their home ties strengthened, and ready to manfully take their part in society and even in the Church on an approved cured basis.

In some cases, they have been men with families and we have had wives come in to thank us tearfully for bringing their husbands back to them. Wives have not always known what had been wrong but they had sensed it and realized they had lost their husbands. We have seen men come first with downward glances and leave months later looking us straight in the eye. We have had them admit after the first interview, "I'm glad I was arrested I have tried and tried to correct my error but knew I'd have to have help and had not the courage to ask for it."

In a few months, some have totally mastered themselves, while others linger on with less power and requiring more time to make the total comeback. We realize that the cure is no more permanent than the individual makes it so and is like the cure for alcoholism subject to continued vigilance. To such men we say, "Physician heal thyself," and promise him if he will stay away from the haunts and the temptations, and the former associates, he may heal himself, cleanse his mind and return to his normal pursuits and a happy state of mind.

The cure for this malady lies in self mastery which is the fundamental basis of the whole gospel program. May we quote again from the work of James Allen:

"A man's mind may be likened to a garden which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild; but whether cultivated or neglected, it must, and will, bring forth. If no useful seeds are put into it, then an abundance of useless weed seeds will fall therein and will continue to produce their kind."

and again:

"The soul attracts that which it secretly harbors, that which it loves, and also that which it fears. It reaches the height of its cherished aspiration; it falls to the level of its unchastened desires, and circumstances are the means by which the soul receives its own."

and again:

"A man does not come to the almshouse or the jail by the tyranny of fate or circumstance, but by the pathway of grovelling thoughts and base desires. Nor does a pure-minded man fall suddenly into crime by stress of any near external force; the criminal thought had long been secretly fostered in the heart, and the hour of opportunity revealed its gathered power. Circumstance does not make the man; it reveals him to himself. No such conditions can exist as descending into vice and its attendant sufferings apart from vicious inclinations, or ascending into virtue and its pure happiness without the continued cultivation of virtuous aspirations; and man, therefore, as the Lord and master of thought, is the maker of himself, the shaper and author of environment. Even at birth, the soul comes to its own and through every step of its earthly pilgrimage it attracts those combinations of conditions which reveal itself which are the reflections of its own purity and impurity, its strength and weakness."

"Men do not attract that which they want, but that which they are."

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". . . Their innermost thoughts and desires are fed with their own food, be it foul or clean."

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"Man is manacled only by himself; thought and action are the jailers of fate--they imprison, being base; they are also the angels of freedom--they liberate, being noble. Not what he wishes and prays for does a man get, but what he justly earns."

The experience of our associate has been most rewarding in what we feel are recoveries.

One man has committed every perversion the imagination could suggest and over a long period, and only last Saturday, turned the corner. Always going to try and 'do the best he could', he made no headway. After some hours of encouragement, he is on his way.

Frequently, in their confessions, these men relieved from some tension and happy in their prospects of a new life, are eager that their former temptors and associates be also helped. They have encouraged them to seek our help. The approach is kindly and not accusing. The person is permitted to tell his own story in his own way and then he is helped in a confidential way to transform himself.

Recently, a public official wrote to thank us for the work our associate had done in helping a good but misguided man to completely transform. Of all the numerous people who have come through this special program, only two have been excommunicated. These were men who were belligerent and rebellious and unyielding, and practically asked for and demanded such action.

The method used by our bishop is the one we think was used by the Savior. He reminds them they are sons of God and:

"CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD."

As the Lord said:

"And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine ONLY BEGOTTEN have I created him; male and female created I them." Moses 2:27

And:

"The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the garden of Eden, GAVE I UNTO MAN HIS AGENCY." Moses 7:32

When Jesus, with his retinue of followers, made his final trip to Jerusalem and the people of a village in Samaria would not permit him to spend the night in their town, James and John had said:

"Lord wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them...?"

And the Redeemer's reply was soft and mild and full of kindness:

"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

This soft approach of helpfulness, not condemnation; of understanding, not accusations of sympathy and not threats has brought many men to their knees in surrender and in gratitude and back to normalcy.

Now, he has new hope. If he is in the image of God, he reaches upward for he must now be like God whose son he is. He has new handholds. He is no longer low and degenerate. He must climb up.

The continued contact seems to be helpful. To have the man return to report success in his efforts or even partial failure is helpful and to these continuing visits credit may be given for recoveries. Many find that since they will be making reports, and additional strength comes from that realization and they control themselves and their thoughts a day at a time, a week at a time, and soon the months have passed and thoughts are controlled and actions are above reproach.

Our bishop dwells largely upon the glories of the Gospel and all its blessings, the happiness of proper family life, the joy in individual cleanliness. It works! And, numerous have been blessed.

A letter from a young man is revealing. His deviation had come when he was only a ten year old boy and was the result largely of curiosity. But he could not wholly eradicate the memory of it. He wrote:

"As I grew older I was too ashamed to tell anyone until I approached the missionary age. I knew it was not so serious as a childish act but nevertheless it was a burden through all the years and I had a guilty conscience. When I was interviewed for my mission, I had the blessed peace I should have had through all the years for my kindly bishop cleared the slate and commended me for the many years of cleanliness. How grateful I was for the privilege of placing my burden on the bishop's shoulders. I felt well and clean."

Another young man who had waded in deep waters wrote:

". . . I am still adjusting and laboring to the new mental attitudes which have been formed during the past year. . . I have been quite happy and content. There are still struggles but through it all, I can look back and see slow but sure improvement. I can see more and more clearly the necessity of making the changes which I am now attempting. I know it is possible if the Lord will help me, and He will if I do my part. . . I appreciate your help and interest. I can never fully express my gratitude for the help the Church has given me. At last, I am free from the fetters of such a damning slavery. Thanks sincerely."

The Lord will not, cannot, permit his Church to tolerate wickedness. His scriptures are replete with the denouncement of evil. From Genesis to Revelations, He calls men to repentance. He hates the sin but loves the sinner, and desires that he be salvaged.

Disfellowshipment or excommunication is the penalty for heavy petting, adultery, fornication, perversion and comparable sins, if there is no repentance. There can be no other way. But everyone who suffers this humiliation and deprivation must blame it on himself for every opportunity is given him to change and mold his life in an acceptable manner. Bishops suffer, and high councils weep when this action is necessary and it is used only when all else fails.

GOD MADE ME THAT WAY, some say as they rationalize and excuse themselves for their perversions. "I can't help it," they add.

This is blasphemy. Is he not made in the image of God, and does he think God to be "that way?" Man is responsible for his own sins. It is possible that he may rationalize and excuse himself till the groove is so deep he cannot get out without great difficulty. But this he can do. Temptations come to all people. The difference between the reprobate and the worthy person is generally that one yielded and the other resisted.

It is true that one's background may make the decision and accomplishment easier or more difficult but if one is mentally alert, he can still control his future. That is the gospel message--personal responsibility.

Shame on the person blaming his perversions on his parents, "man is punishable for his own sins." He can, if normal, rise above the frustrations of childhood and stand on his own feet and answer roll call.

And if the yielding person continues to give way numerous times, he may finally reach the point of no return where he does not want to return. And the Lord says:

... "My spirit will not always strive with man" ...
saith the Lord of Hosts.

The doctors whose report is quoted above state without equivocation:

"The homosexual is not a special order of creation."

To those weaklings who continue to justify themselves by saying, "God made me this way," James answers:

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Do not err, my beloved brethren." James 1:13-16

One young man I called in persistently continued to lie. He kept insisting that I tell him who had reported on him. I answered that was not the important thing but his placing himself in the way of spiritual medication was the vital point. As I left him, I said kindly: "You do not wish to tell me tonight. You will before long, and you will find my door open and my heart warm toward you." Time passed and I began to wonder if I had wrongly predicted, but after a few months, the phone rang one day and he was asking for an appointment. He unburdened his soul voluntarily and began his comeback.

Homosexuality is a sin of the ages. Sodom and Gomorrah were victims of its wretchedness. It was prevalent in decaying Rome. It was present in Israel's wandering days after and before. It was tolerated by the Greeks.

In Exodus, the law required death for the culprit who had sex play with animals, the deviate who committed incest or had homosexual and other vicious practices.

It was a source of much concern to Paul among the Saints. To the Romans, he said:

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature;

"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

* * *

"Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they might commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have the pleasure in them that do them." Romans 1:24, 26, 27, 31, 32

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Romans 6:16

To the Galatians, he gave a long list of these serious sins and concluded:

"...they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21

He warned the Colossians against inordinate affection.

He condemned the Ephesians:

"Who being past feeling have given themselves over into lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Ephesians 4:19

To Timothy came the warning of common sins:

"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good." 2 Timothy 3:3

The gospel of Christ is one of perfection. When talking to his multitudes, He constantly said: "Ye have heard it said of old time", then followed with "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU". He marked the contrasts. To love a friend and hate an enemy was the standard of the law of Israel but the gospel teaches even to love one's enemies. To kill was a sin before, but now unjustified anger becomes sin.

In olden days, to commit adultery was forbidden, but the gospel raises the standard and makes it sinful to think evil and lust mentally. Listen to the Lord:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matthew 5:27-28

The Lord requires: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

He says:

"Behold, I am the light; I have set an example for you." 3 Nephi 18:16

Our assistant approaches in his treatment of these difficult cases, the spirit of the Lord's appeal:

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and YE SHALL FIND REST UNTO YOUR SOULS. For, my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:29

In a nutshell, our program is about like this:

THE MALADY: Mental and Physical sin

THE CURE: Self-mastery

THE VEHICLE: THE CHURCH

THE MEDICATION: THE GOSPEL

THE TREATMENT: Constructive activity so full of good works there is no time nor thought for evil.

It is impressive to see how many times John the Revelator used the word "Overcome." This is the theme of the song of the Church as expressed by the Lord:

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Revelation 3:19-21

This, then, in brief is a little picture of service the Church is trying to render its people in need of help. The Gospel is a program, a way of life, the plan of personal salvation and is based upon personal responsibility. It is developed for man, the offspring of God. Man is a God in embryo and has in him the seeds of Godhood and he can, if he will, rise to great heights. He can lift himself by his own bootstraps as no other creature can do. He was created not to fail and degenerate but to rise to perfection like his Lord Jesus Christ.

It is our great hope that the humble efforts of our great army of leaders, of whom you are among the most vital, will help to save innumerable of those who have lost their way. And better still, that all working together may administer preventive spiritual medicine to make unnecessary the difficult painful cures and the failures and resultant deaths.

Again, I see your great opportunity to serve and I recognize the tremendous good you have already accomplished.

And this is our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master. Amen.