

The Word of Wisdom: "A Principle with Promise"

Lesson 22

Purpose: To encourage us to obey the counsel in the Word of Wisdom, as well as the Lord's other counsel about physical health.

Preparation: Doctrine and Covenants 89 (the Word of Wisdom).
Doctrine and Covenants 49:19-21; 59:15-21; 88:124
(supplemental scriptures).
Our Heritage, pages 25-26.

Special Activity:

Share the following story told by President Gordon B. Hinckley: *"I recall a bishop's telling me of a woman who came to get a [temple] recommend. When asked if she observed the Word of Wisdom, she said that she occasionally drank a cup of coffee. She said, 'Now, bishop, you're not going to let that keep me from going to the temple, are you?' To which he replied, 'Sister, surely you will not let a cup of coffee stand between you and the house of the Lord'"* (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 67; or Ensign, May 1990, 51).

The Word of Wisdom is a simple, straightforward law. Many people know of the physical dangers of disobeying this law. It is important to remember these consequences, but it is also important to remember the physical and spiritual blessings that we will receive as we obey the Word of Wisdom. This lesson discusses these great promises.

1. Why was the Word of Wisdom revealed?

Heavenly Father has provided our bodies for a divine purpose. They are a necessary part of His plan for our eternal progression. Because of their importance, Heavenly Father has given us a stewardship to care for them. In our dispensation, as in ancient times, He has revealed principles of good health to help us keep our bodies clean and pure. Our obedience to these principles is an indication of our love for Him and an expression of our gratitude.

Read: Our Heritage, pages 25-26, and summarize the historical background of the Word of Wisdom. You may want to show the picture of the Newel K.

Whitney Store. The Prophet Joseph Smith received the Word of Wisdom in this store.

•Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and 6:19-20. According to these verses, why is it important that we care for our bodies? (Our bodies are temples and are holy to the Lord. We should keep them pure because they are the dwelling places for our spirits, which are the offspring of God. Respecting our bodies as temples of God manifests our testimony that we are children of God. It also keeps our bodies pure so they can be dwelling places for the Holy Ghost. How we care for our physical bodies affects us spiritually.)

•Read D&C 89:4. What does this verse teach about the Lord's reasons for giving the Word of Wisdom? What are some examples of "evils and designs ... in the hearts of conspiring men" with regard to the harmful substances mentioned in the Word of Wisdom? (Examples include misrepresentations made in advertising and entertainment that using these substances is associated with happiness and success.)

•How is the Word of Wisdom a manifestation of God's love for us? How is it a manifestation of Joseph Smith's calling as a prophet and seer? (The Lord revealed the Word of Wisdom to the Prophet Joseph Smith long before the accuracy of its principles was fully documented in scientific studies. This revelation anticipated the current epidemic of substance abuse. It forewarns and protects us against specific problems of our day.)

2. The Lord's counsel about what is not good for the body

Note to the teacher: As you teach the second and third sections of this lesson, focus on the basic health principles revealed by the Lord. Avoid discussion of health fads, special diets, and other kinds of food and drink. The Lord has not specified everything that we should and should not partake of. "Such revelation is unnecessary," President Joseph Fielding Smith said. "The Word of Wisdom is a basic law. It points the way and gives us ample instruction in regard to both food and drink... If we sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, . . . we will know what is good and what is bad for the body" ("Your Question: The Word of Wisdom," *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1956, 78-79).

Write: Not for the Body and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members. Then list the substance it describes.

- a. D&C 89:5-7. (Wine or strong drink.)
- b. D&C 89:8. (Tobacco.)
- c. D&C 89:9. (Hot drinks, defined as tea and coffee.)

In addition to these substances, we should not:

- a. Use any substance that contains illegal drugs.
- b. Use any other habit-forming substances except under the care of a competent physician.
- c. Misuse prescription and other drugs.

•What are some of the consequences of using these harmful substances? (Discuss physical and spiritual consequences. The following paragraphs about alcohol and tobacco are examples.)

The First Presidency declared: *"Drunken with strong drink, men have lost their reason; their counsel has been destroyed; their judgment and vision are fled... Drink has brought more woe and misery, broken more hearts, wrecked more homes, committed more crimes, filled more coffins, than all the wars the world has suffered"* (in Conference Report, Oct. 1942, 8).

Each year tobacco use causes approximately 2.5 million premature deaths worldwide. Tobacco use also harms millions of innocent victims. For example, smoking by pregnant mothers passes on toxic chemicals that interfere with fetal development, afflicting approximately 3 million babies each year. These babies have lower birth weight and increased risk for neurological and intellectual delays and for premature death. Other innocent victims include nonsmokers who regularly inhale secondhand smoke. These people have much higher rates of respiratory illness and are three times more likely to die of lung cancer than those who do not inhale secondhand smoke. Smokeless tobacco is just as addictive as cigarettes, and users of smokeless tobacco have cancer rates up to fifty times higher than those who do not use tobacco. (See James O. Mason, "I Have a Question," Ensign, Sept. 1986, 59-61.)

•The use of substances that are forbidden in the Word of Wisdom is increasing in many parts of the world, especially among youth. How does advertising entice people to use these substances? (Discuss the false messages of such advertisements.) How do peers and other people entice people to use these

substances? (Discuss how to resist appeals such as "Just a little won't hurt," "Just once won't hurt," "Everyone else does this," and "No one else will know.") What are some other ways people are tempted to use these substances?

- How can seemingly small violations of the Word of Wisdom be damaging?
- How can we strengthen ourselves against temptations to use harmful substances? (Invite class members to tell of experiences when they have resisted temptations to violate the Word of Wisdom.) How can youth help each other obey the Word of Wisdom?
- How can parents effectively teach their children about the Word of Wisdom and help them obey it? (See the Family Home Evening Resource Book [31106], pages 228-31.)
- The harmful substances that are prohibited in the Word of Wisdom cause addiction. Why are addictions to these substances dangerous? How can people overcome addiction to drugs and other harmful substances?

There is hope for people who struggle with addiction. Overcoming addiction usually requires great personal desire and discipline, together with repentance and help from the Lord. Family, friends, and Church leaders may also provide help, and in some cases professional help may be necessary. Invite class members to share examples of how people have overcome addiction to harmful substances.

3. The Lord's counsel about what is good for the body

Write: Good for the Body and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members.

- a. D&C 89:10. (Wholesome herbs-nourishing vegetables and plants.)
- b. D&C 89:11. (Fruit.)
- c. D&C 89:12; see also D&C 49:19. (Flesh of beasts and fowls.)
- d. D&C 89:14-17. (Grains.)
- e. D&C 88:124. (Retiring to bed early and rising early-getting adequate sleep.)
- What does it mean to use food "with prudence"? (D&C 89:11; see also D&C 59:18-20; we should eat food that nourishes our bodies and use moderation in the kind and amount of food we eat). What does it mean to use food "with ...

thanksgiving"? (D&C 89:11). How can we show the Lord our gratitude for the food He provides us?

•What guidelines has the Lord given for using meat? (See D&C 89:12; see also D&C 49:19, 21.) What guidelines has the Lord given for using grains? (See D&C 89:14, 16.)

•What counsel has the Lord given regarding sleep? (See D&C 88:124.) How does getting adequate sleep affect us physically and spiritually?

President Brigham Young said: *"Instead of doing two days' work in one day, wisdom would dictate to [the Saints] that if they desire long life and good health, they must, after sufficient exertion, allow the body to rest before it is entirely exhausted. When exhausted, some argue that they need stimulants.... But instead of these kind of stimulants they should recruit by rest"* (Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 187).

4. Promised blessings for obedience to the Word of Wisdom

The Lord revealed the Word of Wisdom as "a principle with promise" (D&C 89:3).

Write: Promised Blessings and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members. Then list each promise beside the reference.

a. D&C 89:18. (Physical health.)

b. D&C 89:19. (Wisdom and great treasures of knowledge.)

c. D&C 89:20. (The ability to run and not be weary and walk and not faint.)

d. D&C 89:21. (Protection from the destroying angel.)

•How have you been blessed as you have obeyed the Word of Wisdom? (Invite class members to tell of physical and spiritual blessings they have received.)

Point out that those who obey the Word of Wisdom will generally live longer and have a better quality of life than if they did not obey it. However, some people have severe illnesses or disabilities despite obeying the Word of Wisdom. These people can receive the spiritual blessings of obeying the Word of Wisdom even if their physical difficulties continue. Moreover, the Lord's promises are for eternity, and those who do not receive all the promised blessings in this life will

receive them hereafter.

•What are some examples of how obeying the Word of Wisdom helps us "find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures"? (D&C 89:19). (Discuss how obeying the Word of Wisdom helps a person's mental capacities. Discuss also how it helps a person receive spiritual treasures of knowledge, such as testimony, knowledge of divine truths, personal revelation, patriarchal blessings, and temple ordinances and covenants.)

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said: *"I have come to know ... that a fundamental purpose of the Word of Wisdom has to do with revelation.... If someone 'under the influence' [of harmful substances] can hardly listen to plain talk, how can they respond to spiritual promptings that touch their most delicate feelings? As valuable as the Word of Wisdom is as a law of health, it may be much more valuable to you spiritually than it is physically"* (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 28-29; or Ensign, Nov. 1979, 20).

•How might the Lord's promise in D&C 89:20 apply to us physically? How might it apply to us mentally and emotionally? (We will have increased mental and emotional strength, self-mastery, and self-sufficiency.) How might this promise apply to us spiritually? (See Hebrews 12:1-3. We will have increased strength to resist temptation and to "run with patience the race" toward eternal life.)

•How might the Lord's promise in D&C 89:21 apply to us?

Anciently, just before the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, the destroying angel passed over the Israelites' firstborn sons because the people obeyed the prophet Moses and marked their doors with lamb's blood (Exodus 12). Similarly, as we "[walk] in obedience to the commandments," including the Word of Wisdom, the destroying angel will pass by us, meaning we will be saved from spiritual death and blessed with eternal life through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. (See Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 24; or Ensign, May 1996, 19.)

Conclusion:

The Lord has given us the Word of Wisdom because He loves us and is concerned for our physical and spiritual well-being. The Word of Wisdom is more than a code of physical health; it is also a key to great spiritual blessings. Evaluate whether we are treating our bodies the best we can, in accordance with the Lord's counsel about health. As we follow this counsel, the Lord will fulfill His promises to bless us physically and spiritually.

Additional Teaching Ideas: You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

1. Obeying the Word of Wisdom would solve the world's economic problems

•**President Heber J. Grant**, the seventh President of the Church, taught that *"the Word of Wisdom ... would solve the economic problems ... of every ... country, if it were obeyed by the people of the world"* (in Conference Report, Apr. 1936, 48). How do you think this could be so?

Consider the amount of land, money, and other resources that are used to produce harmful substances, advertise them, purchase them, and treat the consequences of their use. For example, in 1985 the cost in America of health care and lost productivity related to the use of tobacco was approximately \$65 billion (see Ensign, Sept. 1986, 61). The costs of the production and use of alcohol are also very high. Consider the potential economic impact of using these resources for beneficial purposes rather than destructive ones.

2. Obeying the Word of Wisdom is associated with additional benefits

Social scientists have found that Church members who live the gospel, including the Word of Wisdom, are more likely than others to be happy in their marriages and satisfied with their family life. They are less likely to engage in premarital or extramarital sex, to experience depression, and to be involved in delinquent, deviant, or antisocial behaviors. (See Robert L. Millet and Noel B. Reynolds, eds., *Latter-day Christianity: 10 Basic Issues* [booklet, 1998], 46-47.)

3. Obeying the Word of Wisdom helps a missionary teach with power

Obeying the Word of Wisdom blessed one missionary in an unexpected way. While he was teaching a man about the Word of Wisdom, the man looked into his eyes and asked, *"Do you mean to tell me that you have never tried drugs, smoked a cigarette, or tasted alcohol in any form?"* The missionary looked directly at the man and spoke with a strong voice, "No, sir. I never have."

The missionary later described the experience that followed: *"A power went through me at that moment and I knew why I had always kept the Word of Wisdom. I am grateful that when I came to that moment in my life, I was able to bear a strong testimony of the importance of the Word of Wisdom because I had always been obedient to it."*

4. "Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength" (D&C 10:4)

•What counsel did the Lord give Joseph Smith in D&C 10:4? (See also Mosiah 4:27.) How might this counsel apply to our health? What are the dangers of disregarding this counsel?

5. Tattoos and unusual body piercing

The Apostle Paul taught that our bodies are holy to the Lord and that they are temples in which the Holy Ghost can dwell (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20). Just as we should not defile our bodies by partaking of harmful substances, we should not defile their external surface with tattoos or unusual piercing. Such modifications can have negative physical, social, and spiritual consequences. (See David A. Burton, "I Have a Question," *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 52-53.)

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The Word of Wisdom

Section 89

Historical Background

President Brigham Young said: *"I think I am as well acquainted with the circumstances which led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom as any man in the Church, although I was not present at the time to witness them. The first school of the prophets was held in a small room situated over the Prophet Joseph's kitchen, in a house which belonged to Bishop Whitney.... The brethren came to that place for hundreds of miles to attend school in a little room probably no larger than eleven by fourteen. When they assembled together in this room after breakfast, the first they did was to light their pipes and, while smoking, talk about the great things of the kingdom and spit all over the room, and as soon as the pipe was out of their mouths a large chew of tobacco would then be taken. Often when the Prophet entered the room to give the school instructions he would find himself in a cloud of tobacco smoke. This, and the complaints of his wife at having to clean so filthy a floor, made the Prophet think upon the matter, and he inquired of the Lord relating to the conduct of the Elders in using tobacco, and the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom was the result of his inquiry. You know what it is and can read it at your leisure."* (In *Journal of Discourses*, 12:158.)

Notes and Commentary

D&C 89:2. Is the Word of Wisdom a Commandment Today?

Although the Word of Wisdom was received on 27 February 1833, its acceptance by individual members of the Church was gradual. On 9 September 1851, some eighteen years after it was given, the Patriarch to the Church, John Smith, delivered a talk in general conference on the Word of Wisdom. During his address, President Brigham Young arose and proposed that all Saints formally covenant to abstain from tea, coffee, tobacco, whiskey, and "all things mentioned in the Word of Wisdom" ("Minutes of the General Conference," *Millennial Star*, 1 Feb. 1852, p. 35). The motion was accepted unanimously and became binding as a commandment for all Church members thereafter.

Bishops and stake presidents are responsible for determining whether members are worthy to receive Church ordinances such as baptism or those available in the temple or to enter the temple to receive ordinances for others. Keeping the Word of Wisdom is a part of that worthiness.

D&C 89:2. Why Does the Lord Say "Not by Commandment or Constraint"?

"The reason undoubtedly why the Word of Wisdom was given-as not by 'commandment or restraint' was that at that time, at least, if it had been given as a commandment it would have brought every man, addicted to the use of these noxious things, under condemnation; so the Lord was merciful and gave them a chance to overcome, before He brought them under the law. Later on, it was announced from this stand, by President Brigham Young that the Word of Wisdom was a revelation and a command of the Lord. [See Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, pp. 183-84]." (Joseph F. Smith, in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1913, p. 14.)

President Heber J. Grant emphasized that the Word of Wisdom was a commandment and warned those who did not obey it that "the day is gone by when the Lord will trifle with the Latter-day Saints. He has said that His Spirit shall not always strive with man." (*Gospel Standards*, pp. 55-56.) Although the Lord allowed a time of adjustment for those who were already members of the Church when the Word of Wisdom was given, today it is expected that all Saints adhere to the commandment.

D&C 89:2. How Does the Word of Wisdom Show the Will of God in Man's Temporal Salvation?

In order to receive a fulness of joy, we must strive to be clean and pure, both in mind and in body. Some of the temporal benefits resulting from obedience to the Word of Wisdom are better health and vitality, strength, and endurance (see

Brigham Young's promise in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:156); greater strength to avoid such physical sins as unchastity (see Grant, *Gospel Standards*, p. 55); a savings in money not spent on harmful substances (see Grant, *Gospel Standards*, pp. 50-52); and greater resistance to many of the diseases that attack the body.

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: "The temporal salvation of the children of men is a most important thing, but sadly neglected by many religious teachers. The truth is that the spiritual salvation is dependent upon the temporal far more than most men realize. The line of demarcation between the temporal, or physical, and the spiritual, cannot be definitely seen. The Lord has said that he has not given a temporal commandment at any time. To men some of these commandments may be temporal, but they are spiritual to the Lord because they all have a bearing on the spiritual or eternal welfare of mankind." (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:383.) Obedience to the Word of Wisdom, keeping the "temple of God" undefiled (1 Corinthians 3:16), invites the Holy Ghost to help us resist the temptations of the world.

The Word of Wisdom is a commandment, and disobedience to any commandment results in the loss of the Spirit. The loss of spiritual health is far more serious than the loss of physical health. President Stephen L Richards noted: "Every commandment of God is spiritual in nature. There are no carnal commandments. We have learned this from modern revelation. While the commandments have effect upon the body and temporal things they are all in essence spiritual. The Word of Wisdom is spiritual. It is true that it enjoins the use of deleterious substances and makes provision for the health of the body. But the largest measure of good derived from its observance is in increased faith and the development of more spiritual power and wisdom. Likewise, the most regrettable and damaging effects of its infractions are spiritual, also. Injury to the body may be comparatively trivial to the damage to the soul in the destruction of faith and the retardation of spiritual growth. So I say, every commandment involves a spiritual growth. So I say, every commandment involves a spiritual principle." (*In Conference Report*, Apr. 1949, p. 141.)

D&C 89:3. Can Everyone Live the Word of Wisdom?

Christ invites all to come unto Him and denies none (see 2 Nephi 26:32). All who humble themselves and come to the Lord may become Saints, and in Doctrine and Covenants 89:3 the Lord assures us that all Saints can obey the Word of Wisdom. Youth who are tempted to smoke, drink, or take drugs should be aware, not only of the spiritual danger of disobedience to God's commandments, but of how difficult it can be to stop taking harmful substances after one has become addicted to them. Individuals who struggle with addictions may not succeed in quitting all at once but can be helped by family, health professionals, medication, fasting, prayer, and priesthood blessings. As individuals overcome their addictions and

keep the commandments, the Lord's blessings of self control and spiritual strength make it that much easier for them to continue to obey the Word of Wisdom.

D&C 89:4. What Evidence Is There Today of "Evils and Designs ... in the Hearts of Conspiring Men"?

Lawsuits against American tobacco companies in the last part of the 20th century made it clear that owners and employees of these companies conspired to hide the dangers of their products.

President David O. McKay observed the gradual growth of these evils in his lifetime: "The purport of that [revelation] impressed me in the twenties and the thirties of this century. I just ask you ... to recall the methods employed by certain tobacco interests to induce women to smoke cigarettes.

"You remember how insidiously they launched their plan. First, by saying that it would reduce weight. They had a slogan: 'Take a cigarette instead of a sweet.'

"Later, some of us who like the theatre, noticed that they would have a young lady light the gentleman's cigarette. Following this a woman's hand would be shown on billboards lighting or taking a cigarette. A year or two passed and soon they were brazen enough to show the lady on the screen or on the billboard smoking the cigarette....

"Parents meekly submit to this and later deplore the fact when their children are hopeless cigarette addicts.'" (In Conference Report, Oct. 1949, pp. 185-86.)

Many through the years have likewise conspired or contributed to making the use of alcohol, coffee, tea, other forms of tobacco, and drugs more socially acceptable.

D&C 89:5. What Consequences Result from Taking Wine and Strong Drink?

"Over the earth ... the demon drink is in control. Drunken with strong drink, men have lost their reason; their counsel has been destroyed; their judgment and vision are fled; they reel forward to destruction.

"Drink brings cruelty into the home; it walks arm in arm with poverty; its companions are disease and plague; it puts chastity to flight; and it knows neither honesty nor fair dealing; it is a total stranger to truth; it drowns conscience; it is the bodyguard of evil; it curses all who touch it.

"Drink has brought more woe and misery, broken more hearts, wrecked more homes, committed more crimes, filled more coffins than all the wars the world has

suffered." (J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Oct. 1942, p. 8; see also Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 55-57.)

D&C 89:5-6. What Kind of Wine Was Used in the Sacrament?

The Lord's instruction in verse 6 that for the sacrament the Saints use "pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make" reinforces His earlier instruction that "you shall not purchase [for the sacrament] wine neither strong drink of your enemies;

"Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made new among you" (D&C 27:3-4).

The "pure wine" in Doctrine and Covenants 89:6 "is understood to mean new or unfermented grape juice, since the Word of Wisdom declares unequivocally against the internal use of alcohol in any form.

"This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that ... water was early in the history of the Church substituted for wine, for sacramental purposes. The revelation reads:

"'For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory-remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins.' [D&C 27:2]." (Widtsoe, *Word of Wisdom*, pp. 60-61.)

D&C 89:7. Strong Drinks Are for Washing the Body

Alcohol is a valuable cleansing agent for wounds and abrasions. When used to bathe an injured part of the body, alcohol performs a service for which it was intended.

D&C 89:8. Tobacco Is Not for the Body

One Latter-day Saint physician noted the effects of tobacco on the body: "Time and time again the medical and psychological sciences have brought forth evidence which points toward the destructive nature of the cigarette. In addition to the evidences recently found which link cigarette smoking to lung cancer, [there are] a number of interesting and arresting discoveries respecting the cigarette. E. A. Murphy and J. F. Mustard discovered that chronic smokers were less able to withstand the effects of radiation than were nonsmokers, and that smoking interfered with action of the bone marrow, the part of the body that manufactures blood. A. J. Schaffer points out that there is a higher premature

birthrate among children whose mothers smoke than among nonsmokers, and that the mortality rate of these premature births was higher among offspring of smokers than of nonsmokers. There is a good deal of evidence, according to A. R. Lindesmith and A. I. Strauss, that in general, nonsmokers are more prone to be 'steady and dependable, hard workers, with stable marriages,' and that they have statistically less difficulty with marriage than do smokers.

"And so the evidence piles up. Bit by bit, piece by piece, a great mass of evidence is accumulating to substantiate from a purely scientific viewpoint the words of the Lord that 'tobacco is not for the body.'

Nicotine in large quantities can take over the nervous system, causing severe convulsions. Smoking causes a man to perform at an altitude as much as 5,000 feet higher than he really is, because of the oxygen space it preempts in his blood." (W. Dean Belnap, "Tobacco and the Spirit of Man," Instructor, Dec. 1966, p. 464.)

As serious as the physical dangers are for using tobacco, the spiritual dangers, especially for members of the Church who know the law, are even more serious. "In my judgment," said Elder George Albert Smith, "the use of tobacco, a little thing as it seems to some men, has been the means of destroying their spiritual life, has been the means of driving from them the companionship of the Spirit of our Father, has alienated them from the society of good men and women, and has brought upon them the disregard and reproach of the children that have been born to them, and yet the devil will say to a man, Oh, it's only a little thing!" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1918, p. 40).

D&C 89:8. "Tobacco ... Is an Herb for Bruises and All Sick Cattle"

Tobacco, like alcohol, possesses medicinal properties for use on sick animals. When applied with skill, a tobacco poultice can be useful in healing the cuts and bruises of cattle. Alcohol and tobacco have place when used as the Lord intended.

D&C 89:9. What Does the Phrase "Hot Drinks" Mean?

Some of the early Brethren explained what was meant by this phrase. Hyrum Smith, brother of the Prophet, wrote: "And again, 'hot drinks are not for the body, or belly;' there are many who wonder what this can mean; whether it refers to tea, or coffee, or not. I say it does refer to tea, and coffee." ("The Word of Wisdom," Times and Seasons, 1 June 1842, p. 800.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: "I understand that some of the people are excusing themselves in using tea and coffee, because the Lord only said 'hot drinks' in the

revelation of the Word of Wisdom....

"Tea and coffee ... are what the Lord meant when He said 'hot drinks.'" (In Joel H. Johnson, Voice from the Mountains [Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1881], p. 12.)

D&C 89:9. Are Other Drinks Forbidden by the Word of Wisdom?

What about cola drinks, kava, some health or sports drinks, or other drinks containing stimulants? An official statement by the Church's leaders reads: "With reference to cola drinks, the Church has never officially taken a position on this matter, but the leaders of the Church have advised, and we do now specifically advise, against the use of any drink containing harmful habit-forming drugs under circumstances that would result in acquiring the habit. Any beverage that contains ingredients harmful to the body should be avoided." (Priesthood Bulletin, Feb. 1972, p. 4.)

D&C 89:10-11. Why Isn't the Word of Wisdom More Explicit?

The Doctrine and Covenants does not specifically mention heroin, cocaine, marijuana, ecstasy, other illegal drugs, or the abuse of prescription drugs. President Joseph Fielding Smith said: "Such revelation is unnecessary. The Word of Wisdom is a basic law. It points the way and gives us ample instruction in regard to both food and drink, good for the body and also detrimental. If we sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, we need no further counsel....

"Thus by keeping the commandments we are promised inspiration and the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord through which we will know what is good and what is bad for the body, without the Lord presenting us with a detailed list separating the good things from the bad that we may be protected. We will learn by this faithful observance that the promises of the Lord are fulfilled." (Improvement Era, Feb. 1956, pp. 78-79.)

D&C 89:10. Wholesome Herbs Are Ordained for the Use of Man

The word herb refers to vegetables and plants that are nourishing and healthful for man. Doctrine and Covenants 89:5-9 contains warnings against things not good for man, while verses 10-17 list the things that should be used to maintain good health. These "God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man" (v. 10).

D&C 89:11. What Was Intended by the Phrase "in the Season Thereof"?

"Some have stumbled over the meaning of this expression and have argued that grains and fruits should only be used in the season of their growth and when they have ripened. This is not the intent, but any grain or fruit is out of season no matter what part of the year it may be, if it is unfit for use. The apple under the tree bruised and decaying is out of season while the good fruit is waiting to be plucked from the tree." (Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation, 1:385.)

Elder John A. Widtsoe explained: "The phrase 'in the season thereof,' referring to fruits and vegetables, has raised much speculation. It indicates simply the superior value of fresh foods as demonstrated by modern science, but does not necessarily prohibit the use of fruits or vegetables out of season if preserved by proper methods." (Evidences and Reconciliations, 3:157.)

With modern preservation techniques, today it is possible to enjoy nearly every food "in the season thereof" all through the year.

D&C 89:11. Why Are Herbs and Fruits to Be Used with "Prudence and Thanksgiving"?

It is not necessary to be commanded in all things. With the guidelines the Lord has given in this revelation, we should have little difficulty in determining both what and how much we can wisely eat.

"In another revelation (Sec. 59) we are told they are not to be used 'to excess, neither by extortion.' The difficulty with most of the human family, is eating too much, and failing to heed his counsel. There would be less disease and mankind would live longer if all would also heed the counsel of the Lord concerning the use of wholesome foods." (Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation, 1:385.) D&C 89:12. "Flesh Is to Be Used Sparingly" The Word of Wisdom is not a system of vegetarianism. Clearly, meat is permitted [see D&C 42:18]. Naturally, that includes animal products, less subject than meat to putrefactive and other disturbances, such as eggs, milk, and cheese. These products cannot be excluded simply because they are not mentioned specifically. By that token most of our foodstuffs could not be eaten." (Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, 3:156-57.)

D&C 89:13. "Only in Times of Winter, or of Cold, or Famine"

This verse has caused some to ask if meat should be eaten in the summer. Meat has more calories than fruits and vegetables, which some individuals may need fewer of in summer than winter. Also, before fruits and vegetables could be preserved, people often did not have enough other food to eat in winter. Spoiled meat can be fatal if eaten, and in former times meat spoiled more readily in summer than winter.

Modern methods of refrigeration now make it possible to preserve meat in any season. The key word with respect to the use of meat is sparingly (D&C 89:12).

D&C 89:14-17. "All Grain Is Ordained for the Use of Man and of Beasts"

Grains include wheat, rice, corn or maize, barley, millet, sorghum, oats, and rye. Grains are good as food for people and as feed for animals.

D&C 89:18-21. Why Is Obedience to the Word of Wisdom Crucial?

Doctrine and Covenants 89:3 states that this revelation was "given for a principle with promise." To receive the promise, we must obey the principle.

The purpose of the Word of Wisdom is more spiritual than physical. The blessings of obedience are much greater than just physical health (see D&C 76:5-10). Obedience is the condition on which all blessings are predicated (see D&C 130:20-21).

Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote: "The reward for keeping the Word of Wisdom is four-fold. 1. Self-control is developed. That is implied in verse 3 of the revelation which states that the Word of Wisdom is 'adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all Saints, who are or can be called Saints.' 2. Strength of body, including resistance to contagion, is a result of wise living. 3. Clearness of mind is the gift of those whose bodies are in a healthy condition. 4. Spiritual power comes to all who conquer their appetites, live normally and look upward to God." (Program of the Church, pp. 39-40.)

D&C 89:18. "Walking in Obedience to the Commandments"

Elder Ezra T. Benson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve under President Brigham Young, broadened the usual interpretation of the Word of Wisdom when he said: "When we first heard the revelation upon the Word of Wisdom many of us thought it consisted merely in our drinking tea and coffee, but it is not only using tea and coffee and our tobacco and whisky, but it is every other evil which is calculated to contaminate this people. The Word of Wisdom implies to cease from adultery, to cease from all manner of excesses, and from all kinds of wickedness and abomination that are common amongst this generation-it is, strictly speaking, keeping the commandments of God, and living by every word that proceedeth from His mouth." (In Journal of Discourses, 2:358.)

D&C 89:19. Wisdom and Treasures of Knowledge

Many scientific and technological advances are attributable to the new light and knowledge poured out on the world since the restoration of the gospel. But there is a far more important kind of knowledge with which Latter-day Saints are also concerned. Elder LeGrand Richards asked if there is "any treasure of knowledge in this world to be sought after, more desirable than to know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, to know that his kingdom has been established again in the earth, to know that God has promised a reward for every commandment that he has given, to know that he has created this earth that we might prove unto him that we would do all things, not just a few of them, all things whatsoever the Lord our God hath commanded?" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1961, p. 46).

President George Albert Smith pointed to a literal fulfillment of the promise of great treasures of knowledge: "I refer you to the February, 1944, number of The Improvement Era wherein was published a graph showing the relative position of the states of the Union as to the number of scientists born in those states in proportion to population. Strange as it may seem, if you began at the lower corner of that graph and followed up state by state, you would come to the state of Massachusetts next to the highest on the graph, yet you would not have reached the state of Utah. You have to go twenty percent points higher up the graph to find Utah, the state that has produced more scientists born within its borders per capita than any other state in the American Union. That wasn't an accident; it was a fulfillment of the promise of God as a result of observance of the Lord's commandments." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1945, pp. 21-22.)

D&C 89:21. "And I the Lord Give Unto Them a Promise"

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. said of verse 21: "This does not say and this does not mean, that to keep the Word of Wisdom is to insure us against death, for death is, in the eternal plan, co-equal with birth. This is the eternal decree. [1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Nephi 9:6.] But it does mean that the destroying angel, he who comes to punish the unrighteous for their sins, as he in olden time afflicted the corrupt Egyptians in their wickedness [Exodus 12:23, 29], shall pass by the Saints, 'who are walking in obedience to the commandments,' and who 'remember to keep and do these sayings.' These promises do mean that all those who qualify themselves to enjoy them will be permitted so to live out their lives that they may gain the full experiences and get the full knowledge which they need in order to progress to the highest exaltation in eternity, all these will live until their work is finished and God calls them back to their eternal home, as a reward." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1940, pp. 17-18.)

If we live the Word of Wisdom, we keep ourselves pure before the Lord, who can then bestow all His blessings both in this world and in the world to come.

"Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith"
Selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith
Scriptural annotations and introduction by Richard C. Galbraith.

Page 445, Footnote 9, Written by Joseph Fielding Smith.

This statement by the Prophet is in accord with the action of the High Council of the Church shortly after its organization in February, 1834. At one of the earliest meetings of this council over which the Presidency of the Church presided, the following action was taken: The question was asked:

"Whether disobedience to the word of wisdom was a transgression sufficient to deprive an official member from holding office in the Church, after having it sufficiently taught him?" After a free and full discussion, Joseph Smith the Prophet gave the following decision which was unanimously accepted by the council: "No official member in this Church is worthy to hold an office after having the word of wisdom properly taught him; and he, the official member, neglecting to comply with and obey it."

Answers to Gospel Questions
Joseph Fielding Smith
Volume 1, page 197-201

The Word of Wisdom

Question.- "Will you please tell me if the Word of Wisdom has ever been presented to the Church as a commandment making its observance obligatory upon the members of the Church?"

Answer- This question is one of a score that have been received in relation to the Word of Wisdom. Some of the questions are due to misunderstanding and others, apparently, seeking answers that will justify a violation or modification of the provisions enumerated in the revelation. The simple answer to this question is yes, such commandment has been given and repeated on several occasions. September 9, 1851, President Brigham Young stated that the members of the Church had had sufficient time to be taught the import of this revelation and that henceforth it was to be considered a divine commandment. This was first put to vote before the female members of the congregation and then before the men and by unanimous vote accepted. President Joseph F. Smith at a conference meeting in October 1908, made the same statement, and this has been repeated from time to time.

It is true that when it was first revealed it was not given as a commandment made mandatory upon the members as the commandments of the Decalogue are. Nevertheless the meaning is clear, so that no member with sincere desire to do the will of the Lord will think of wilfully violating the counsel it contains. During the first few years after the organization of the Church, converts came out of the world who saw nothing wrong in the use of tobacco and the drinking of wine, and in some instances even stronger alcoholic beverages. To correct this evil, which reason teaches us is harmful to the body, and to cleanse the Church of such habits, the Lord gave this Word of Wisdom. No matter how we may look at it, the intent is clear that it should be faithfully observed. To answer all the questions which have been asked dealing with its instruction would require a volume of considerable size. Let us rather consider the purpose for which it was given:

To be sent greeting; not by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days--

Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints. ¹

THE LORD'S WILL SHOULD BE OBSERVED

It seems to most members of the Church that all the Lord needs to say is that it is his will that this revelation should be observed and kept. It is written:

For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. ²

Among other questions received we find such as this: "Why does not the Lord give us further revelation to cover the many other stimulants and drinks and the proper foods for the body?" The answer is because such revelation is unnecessary. The Word of Wisdom is a basic law. It points the way and gives us ample instruction in regard to both food and drink, good for the body and also detrimental. If we sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, we need no further counsel. This wonderful instruction contains the following promise:

And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. ³

Thus by keeping the commandment we are promised inspiration and the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord through which we will know what is good and what is bad for the body, without the Lord's presenting us with a detailed list separating the good things from the bad that we may be protected. We will learn by this faithful observance that the promises of the Lord are fulfilled. We will learn more nearly the value of our mortal bodies. They have been given us as eternal tabernacles for our spirits. Each soul (i.e. spirit and body combined) in the resurrection will be joined inseparably, never again to be divided. We will have our own identity as distinctly as we do now, for as Amulek said:

The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt....

Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. ⁴

THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD WILL OBEY

In the resurrection we are to receive rewards according to our individual works, and it is written that they who are filthy in this life will, in that life, be filthy still. ⁵ Therefore if we love the truth, we should delight in doing those things which the Lord would have us do.

One passage in this revelation ⁶ is quite generally overlooked. It states that the time should come when wicked and designing men would resort to practices of adulteration of foods and drinks in order to get gain, to the injury of the health of their victims. How true these words have been. So evil have these practices become that the government was forced to enact pure food and drug laws for the protection of the people. Notwithstanding these wholesome laws, still evil practices are going on contrary to the law, and harmful drugs are smuggled into the country bringing misery and death to thousands.

Our Heritage
A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint
pp 25-26.

School of the Prophets

There are many ways in which we may break the Word of Wisdom. We break it when we eat more than is needful, even of wholesome foods. We have been commanded to do all things in moderation, "with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion." ⁷ The Lord has not condemned the use of white flour, nor white granulated sugar. There are some among us who cannot eat whole wheat bread and the coarser foods because of peculiar physical conditions. If white sugar were to be condemned, then the Lord would not have revealed to President Wilford Woodruff the need of building a sugar factory. Some persons are allergic to one thing and others to another, yet what they cannot take are wholesome to others. Any perfect food that is good for the body, can be harmful by over-indulgence. According to the promise of the Lord we will have wisdom to understand these things by virtue of faithful observance of this basic law -the Word of Wisdom.

A safe guide to each and all is this: If in doubt as to any food or drink, whether it is good or harmful, let it alone until you have learned the truth in regard to it. If anything offered is habit-forming, we will be safe in concluding that it contains some ingredients that are harmful to the body and should be avoided.

Footnotes:

1. D. & C:89:2-3.
2. D & C:58:26.
3. D & C:89:18-20.
4. Alma 11:43, 45.
5. Revelation 22:11; Alma 41:14-15.
6. D. & C. 89:4.
7. D & C:59:20.

In December 1832 and January 1833, the Prophet Joseph received the revelation that became section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Among other things, this revelation directed that a "school of the prophets" (D&C 88:127) be formed to instruct the brethren in gospel doctrine and principles, the affairs of the Church, and other matters.

During the winter of 1833 the School of the Prophets met frequently, and Joseph and Emma Smith both became concerned about the brethren's customary use of tobacco, especially the cloud of tobacco smoke in meetings and lack of cleanliness caused by chewing tobacco. Joseph Smith inquired of the Lord about the matter and received the revelation that is known as the Word of Wisdom. This revelation gave the Lord's commandments for the care of the body and spirit, and promised that those who obeyed them would receive the spiritual blessings of "wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures" (D&C 89:19).

The Word of Wisdom also contained information about health that was not known to the medical or scientific world at the time but has since been proven to be of great benefit, such as the counsel not to use tobacco or alcohol.



The Word of Wisdom: The Principle and the Promises

*President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve
Apostles, Ensign, May 1996, 17*

These marvelous young people in this choir are typical of the young people that we meet all over the Church. How we love them. How grateful we are for you, our youth. *Nothing* is more precious than our children, our youth. And it is to you, our youth, that I speak. Several years ago in Africa I learned how dangerously invisible crocodiles can be. I then warned our youth about unseen spiritual crocodiles lying in wait to destroy them.

Those invisible dangers have greatly increased in number, and now there are many kinds of them.

Some of them are like land mines hidden about in a field you must cross on your way to maturity. Neighborhoods and schools, which once were safe, are no longer secure. Fortunately you have within you a spiritual power much like a mine detector. If you learn how it works, it will warn you of the presence of unseen crocodiles and mines, and you can avoid trouble.

Three years after the organization of the Church, a revelation came which described our day in these prophetic words: “Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation” ([D&C 89:4](#)).

The Word of Wisdom put restrictions on members of the Church. To this day those regulations apply to every member and to everyone who seeks to join the Church.

They are so compelling that no one is to be baptized into the Church without first agreeing to live by them. No one will be called to teach or to lead unless they accept them. When you want to go to the temple, you will be asked if you keep the Word of Wisdom. If you do not, you cannot go to the house of the Lord until you are fully worthy.

We know that young people generally don’t like restrictions. Believe it or not, we were young once and we remember.

A resistance to anything that limits one’s conduct has almost taken over society. Our whole social order could self-destruct over the obsession with freedom disconnected from responsibility, where choice is imagined to be somehow independent of consequences.

Young people, you must understand that there is something of colossal importance to justify the restrictions imposed by the Word of Wisdom!

While the revelation came first as a “greeting; not by commandment or constraint” ([D&C 89:2](#)), when members of the Church had had time to be taught the import of the revelation, succeeding Presidents of the Church declared it to be a commandment. And it was accepted by the Church as such.

The Word of Wisdom was “given for a principle with promise” ([D&C 89:3](#)). That word *principle* in the revelation is a very important one. A principle is an enduring truth, a law, a rule you can adopt to guide you in making decisions. Generally principles are not spelled out in detail. That leaves you free to find your way with an enduring truth, a principle, as your anchor.

Members write in asking if this thing or that is against the Word of Wisdom. It’s well known that tea, coffee, liquor, and tobacco are against it. It has not been spelled out in more detail. Rather, we teach the principle together with the promised blessings. There are many habit-forming, addictive things that one can drink or chew or inhale or inject which injure both body and spirit which are not mentioned in the revelation.

Everything harmful is not specifically listed; arsenic, for instance—certainly bad, but not habit-forming! He who must be commanded in all things, the Lord said, “is a slothful and not a wise servant” ([D&C 58:26](#)).

In some cultures, native drinks are claimed to be harmless because they are not specifically mentioned in the revelation. Yet they draw members, particularly men, away from their families to parties which certainly offend the principle. Promises made in the revelation will be denied to the careless or the reckless.

Obedience to counsel will keep you on the safe side of life.

The story is told of a king who was choosing between two drivers for his coach. He ordered each of them to drive his coach down a steep, winding road cut into a high cliff.

The first driver came down slowly, hugging the wall of the cliff. The second driver demonstrated great talent and ability. He raced down the mountain, with the coach so close at times that half the wheel was off the edge of the cliff.

The king was very thoughtful, then wisely chose the first man to drive his coach. It is best to stay on the safe side of things.

The Word of Wisdom is “adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints” ([D&C 89:3](#)). It is buttressed by other scriptures. They teach that the good things of the earth “are made for the benefit and the use of man, ... Yea,” the Lord said, “for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul, ... to be used, with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion” ([D&C 59:18–20](#)).

Young people, learn to use moderation and common sense in matters of health and nutrition, and particularly in medication. Avoid being extreme or fanatical or becoming a faddist.

For example, the Word of Wisdom counsels us to eat meat sparingly (see [D&C 89:12](#)). Lest someone become extreme, we are told in another revelation that “whoso forbiddeth to [eat meat] is not ordained of God” ([D&C 49:18](#)). [1](#)

Another scripture counsels, “Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; ... cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated” ([D&C 88:124](#)).

Honor the principle of the Word of Wisdom and you will receive the promised blessings. “All saints,” the revelation promises, “who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments,” are promised that they “shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones” and “shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint” ([D&C 89:18, 20](#)).

The Word of Wisdom does not promise you perfect health, but it teaches how to keep the body you were born with in the best condition and your mind alert to delicate spiritual promptings.

I remember a blessing I received when I was serving in the military. It included counsel that’s good for every young person: “You have been given a body of such

physical proportions and fitness as to enable your spirit to function through it. ... You should cherish this as a great heritage. Guard [it] and protect it. Take nothing into it that shall harm the organs thereof because it is sacred. It is the instrument of your mind and [the] foundation of your character.” That counsel had great influence on me.

The promise of health for living the standard of the revelation is not limited to members of the Church. Tell your nonmember friends about the Word of Wisdom and urge them to live it.

And then there is a greater blessing promised in the Word of Wisdom. Those who obey it are promised that they “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” ([D&C 89:19](#)). This is the personal revelation through which you can detect invisible crocodiles or hidden mines or other dangers.

When you were confirmed a member of the Church, you had conferred upon you the gift of the Holy Ghost. “Know ye not,” Paul wrote, “that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ... ?” ([1 Cor. 6:19](#)).

And the Lord said, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” ([John 14:26](#)).

There’s a final promise in the revelation. Speaking again of those who keep and do and obey these commandments, the Lord said, “I ... give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” ([D&C 89:21](#)). That is a remarkable promise.

To understand it, we must turn to the time of Moses. The Israelites had been enslaved for 400 years. Moses came as their deliverer. He called forth plagues upon Egypt. The Pharaoh agreed each time to free the Israelites, but each time he reneged on his promise. Finally, “the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. ... All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die” ([Ex. 11:1, 5](#)).

Moses told the Israelites to “take ... a lamb ... without blemish, a male of the first year. ... Neither shall ye break a bone thereof” ([Ex. 12:3, 5, 46](#); see also [John 19:33](#)).

They were to prepare the lamb as a feast and “take of the blood, and strike it on the ... door post of the houses. ... For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land ... : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you. ... And this day

... ye shall keep ... by an ordinance for ever” [\(Ex. 12:7, 12-14\)](#). “When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this ... ? ... ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover” [\(Ex. 12:26-27\)](#).

Surely, young people, you see the prophetic symbolism in the Passover. Christ was “the Lamb of God” [\(John 1:29, 36\)](#), the firstborn, male, without blemish. He was slain without breaking his bones, even though the soldiers were sent to do it.

But it is not from mortal death that we shall be spared in such a Passover if we walk in obedience to these commandments, for each of us in time shall die. But there is spiritual death which you need not suffer. If you are obedient, that spiritual death will pass over you, for “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,” the revelation teaches [\(1 Cor. 5:7\)](#).

While the Word of Wisdom requires strict obedience, in return it promises health, great treasures of knowledge, and that redemption bought for us by the Lamb of God, who was slain that we might be redeemed.

The law of sacrifice was fulfilled with the Crucifixion. The Lord instituted the sacrament in its place. That is the ordinance we shall keep forever! Young people, attend your meetings and partake of the sacrament.

Surely the Word of Wisdom was given so that you may keep the delicate, sensitive, spiritual part of your nature on proper alert. Learn to “listen” to your feelings. You will be guided and warned and taught and blessed.

Even though young life is always filled with uncertainties, young people, do not fear the future!

Your young dreams can be realized. All of your worthy, natural physical and emotional desires can be satisfied. You can find a companion to whom you can offer a body free from addiction, from depressants, from stimulants, and a mind sensitive to spiritual guidance and impressions.

You can be sealed together for time and for all eternity in a marriage covenant and express that love freely, which has as its consummate purpose the begetting of life, of children, of family, of happiness.

If you are one who’s been wandering off course, now is the time to return. You can, you know. Young people, go forward with faith. You’ll be led by the Spirit as was Nephi, “not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do” [\(1 Ne. 4:6\)](#).

Keep the Word of Wisdom. Seek worthy companions. Attend church faithfully. Never fail daily to seek for help through prayer. And I promise you that the way

will be easier and you shall have a composure of mind and a confident attitude toward life and the future. You shall be warned of dangers and shall be guided through the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.

I bear witness that this revelation is a powerful protection to all members of the Church, particularly to you, the youth of the Church, as you face a life full of so many troubles and danger and uncertainties. But young members of the Church, have faith. The Lord will be with you; you will be guided. I bear witness of him and of his sacrifice and of his Atonement and of his love for you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.