Birth Control — General Authority Statements
True principles are always true—they do not change over time, especially not to accommodate the philosophies of the world.

Dallin H. Oaks, Conference Report, Ensign, November 1993, pp. 72ff.

... Satan’s most strenuous opposition is directed at whatever is most important to the Father’s plan. Satan seeks to ... confuse gender, to undermine marriage, and to discourage childbearing (especially by parents who will raise children in righteousness).

Maleness and femaleness, marriage, and the bearing and nurturing of children are all essential to the great plan of happiness. Modern revelation makes clear that what we call gender was part of our existence prior to our birth. God declares that he created “male and female” (D&C 20:18; Moses 2:27; Gen 1:27)....

To the first man and woman on earth, the Lord said, “Be fruitful, and multiply” (Moses 2:28; see also Gen 1:28; Abr 4:28). This commandment was first in sequence and first in importance. It was essential that God’s spirit children have mortal birth and an opportunity to progress toward eternal life. Consequently, all things related to procreation, are prime targets for the adversary’s efforts to thwart the plan of God....

We live in a day when there are many political, legal, and social pressures for changes that confuse gender and homogenize the differences between men and women....

The power to create mortal life is the most exalted power God has given his children. Its use was mandated in the first commandment, but another important commandment was given to forbid its misuse. The emphasis we place on the law of chastity is explained by our understanding of the purpose of our procreative powers in the accomplishment of God’s plan.

The expression of our procreative powers is pleasing to God, but he has commanded that this be confined within the relationship of marriage. President Spencer W. Kimball taught that “in the context of lawful marriage, the intimacy of sexual relations is right and divinely approved. There is nothing unholy or degrading about sexuality in itself, for by that means men and women join in a process of creation and in an expression of love” (The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed. Edward L. Kimball, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982, p. 311).

Outside the bonds of marriage, all uses of the procreative power are to one degree or another a sinful degrading and perversion of the most divine attribute of men and women.... Some who do not know the plan of salvation behave like promiscuous animals, but Latter-day Saints—especially those who are under sacred covenants—have no such latitude. We are solemnly responsible to God for the destruction or misuse of the creative powers he has placed within us.

The ultimate act of destruction is to take a life. That is why abortion is such a serious sin. Our attitude toward abortion is not based on revealed knowledge of when mortal life begins for legal purposes. It is fixed by our knowledge that according to an eternal plan all of the spirit children of God must come to this earth for a glorious purpose, and that individual identify began long before conception and will continue for all the eternities to come. We rely on the prophets of God, who have told us that while there may be “rare” exceptions, “the practice of elective abortion is fundamentally contrary to the Lord’s injunction, ‘Thou shalt not ... kill, nor do anything like unto it’ (D&C 59:6)” (1991 Supplement to the 1989 General Handbook of Instructions, p. 1).

Our knowledge of the great plan of happiness also gives us a unique perspective on the subject of marriage and the bearing of children. In this we also run counter to some strong current forces in custom, law, and economics.

Marriage is disdained by an increasing number of couples, and many who marry choose to forgo children or place severe limits on their number. In recent years strong economic pressures in many nations have altered the traditional assumption of a single breadwinner per family. Increases in the number of working mothers of young children inevitably signal a reduced commitment of parental time to nurturing the young. The effect of these reductions is evident in the rising numbers of abortions, divorces, child neglect, and juvenile crime.

We are taught that marriage is necessary for the accomplishment of God’s plan, to provide the approved setting for mortal birth, and to prepare family members for eternal life. “Marriage is ordained of God unto man,” the Lord said, “that the earth might answer the end of its creation; and that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made” (D&C 49:15-17).

Our concept of marriage is motivated by revealed truth, not by worldly sociology. The Apostle Paul taught “neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord” (1 Cor 11:11). President Spencer W. Kimball explained, “Without proper and successful marriage, one will never be exalted” (Marriage and Divorce, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, p. 24).

According to custom, men are expected to take the initiative in seeking marriage. That is why President Joseph F. Smith directed his prophetic pressure at men. He said, “No man who is marriageable is fully living his religion who remains unmarried” (Gospel Doctrine, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939, p. 275.) We hear of some worthy LDS men in their thirties who are busy accumulating property and enjoying freedom from family responsibilities without any sense of urgency about marriage. Beware, brethren. You are deficient in a sacred duty.

Knowledge of the great plan of happiness also gives Latter-day Saints a distinctive attitude toward the bearing and nurturing of children.

In some times and places, children have been regarded as no more than laborers in a family economic enterprise or as insurers of support for their parents. Though repelled by these repressions, some persons in our day have no compunctions against similar attitudes that subordinate the welfare of a spirit child of God to the comfort or convenience of parents.

The Savior taught that we should not lay up treasures on earth but should lay up treasures in heaven (see Mt 6:19-21). In light of the ultimate purpose of the great plan of happiness, I believe that the ultimate treasures on earth and in heaven are our children and our posterity.

President Kimball said, “It is an act of extreme selfishness for a married couple to refuse to have children when they are able to do so” (Ensign, May 1979, p. 6). When married couples postpone childbearing until after they have satisfied their material goals, the mere passage of time assures that they seriously reduce their potential to participate in furthering our Heavenly Father’s plan for all of his spirit children. Faithful Latter-day Saints cannot afford to look upon children as an interference with what the world calls “self-fulfillment.” Our covenants with God and the ultimate purpose of life are tied up in those little ones who reach for our time, our love, and our sacrifices.

How many children should a couple have? All they can
care for! Of course, to care for children means more than simply giving them life. Children must be loved, nurtured, taught, fed, clothed, housed, and well started in their capacities to be good parents themselves. Exercising faith in God’s promises to bless them when they are keeping the commandments, many LDS parents have large families. Others seek but are not blessed with children or with the number of children they desire. In a matter as intimate as this, we should not judge one another.

President Gordon B. Hinckley gave this inspired counsel to an audience of young Latter-day Saints:

“I like to think of the positive side of the equation, of the meaning and sanctity of life, of the purpose of this estate in our eternal journey, of the need for the experiences of mortal life under the great plan of God our Father, of the joy that is to be found only where there are children in the home, of the blessings that come of good posterity. When I think of these values and see them taught and observed, then I am willing to leave the question of numbers to the man and the woman and the Lord” (“If I Were You, What Would I Do?” Brigham Young University 1983-84 Fireside and Devotional Speeches, Provo, Utah: University Publications, 1984, p. 11).

Some who are listening to this message are probably saying, “But what about me?” We know that many worthy and wonderful Latter-day Saints currently lack the ideal opportunities and essential requirements for their progress. Singleness, childlessness, death, and divorce frustrate ideals and postpone the fulfillment of promised blessings. In addition, some women who desire to be full-time mothers and homemakers have been literally compelled to enter the full-time work force. But these frustrations are only temporary. The Lord has promised that in the eternities no blessing will be denied his sons and daughters.

I pray that we will not let the challenges and temporary diversions of mortality cause of to forget our covenants and lose sight of our eternal destiny....

The First Presidency, David O. McKay, Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner, April 14, 1969

The First Presidency is being asked from time to time as to what the attitude of the Church is regarding birth control. In order that you may be informed on this subject and that you may be prepared to convey the proper information to the members of the Church under your jurisdiction, we have decided to give you the following statement:

We seriously regret that there should exist a sentiment or feeling among any members of the Church to curtail the birth of their children. We have been commanded to multiply and replenish the earth that we may have joy and rejoicing in our posterity.

Where husband and wife enjoy health and vigor and are free from impurities that would be entailed upon their posterity, it is contrary to the teachings of the Church artificially to curtail or prevent the birth of children. We believe that those who practice birth control will reap disappointment by and by.

However, we feel that men must be considerate of their wives who bear the greater responsibility not only of bearing children, but of caring for them through childhood. To this end the mother’s health and strength should be conserved and the husband’s consideration for his wife is his first duty, and self-control a dominant factor in all their relationships.

It is our further feeling that married couples should seek inspiration and wisdom from the Lord that they may exercise discretion in solving their marital problems, and that they may be permitted to rear their children in accordance with the teachings of the gospel.

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 359

We can’t build a happy home, we can’t build a happy married life, on the foundation of immorality. It can’t be done. So I would beseech our young people to reserve for the marriage relationship those sweet and lovely and intimate associations. Not only that, but when those associations come, let them be primarily for the purpose of procreation, for the having of a family, because it is not pleasing in the sight of God to enjoy the pleasures of those associations and refuse to accept the responsibilities of parenthood.

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 549

There are voices in our midst which would attempt to convince you that these home-centered truths are not applicable to our present-day conditions. If you listen and heed, you will be lured away from your principal obligations. Beguiling voices in the world cry out for “alternative life-styles” for women. They maintain that some women are better suited for careers than for marriage and motherhood. These individuals spread their discontent by the propaganda that there are more exciting and self-fulfilling roles for women than homemaking. Some even have been bold to suggest that the Church move away from the Mormon woman stereotype of homemaking and rearing children. They also say it is wise to limit your family so you can have more time for personal goals and self-fulfillment. (CR October 1981, Ensign 11 [November 1981]: 105.)

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 549

A woman whose life is involved in the righteous rearing of her children has a better chance of keeping up her spirits than the woman whose total concern is centered in her own personal problems. (CR October 1974, Ensign 11 [November 1974]: 66.)

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 541

Today the undermining of the home and family is on the increase, with the devil anxiously working to displace the father as the head of the home and create rebellion among the children. The Book of Mormon describes this condition when it states, “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.” And then these words follow—and consider these words seriously when you think of those political leaders who are promoting birth control and abortion: “O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths” (Isaiah 3:12; 2 Nephi 13:12). Let me warn the sisters in all seriousness that you who submit yourselves to an abortion or to an operation that precludes you from safely having additional healthy children are jeopardizing your exaltation and your future membership in the kingdom of God. (God, Family, Country, p. 224.)

The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, pp. 324-331

We must share the gift of life. John and Mary, tomorrow
when I repeat the phrases which will bind you for eternity, I shall say the same impressive words which the Lord said to that handsome youth and his lovely bride in the Garden of Eden: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” (Genesis 1:28) The Lord does not waste words. He meant what he said. You did not come on earth just to “eat, drink, and be merry.” You came knowing full well your responsibilities. You came to get for yourself a mortal body which could become perfected and immortalized, and you understood that you were to act in partnership with God in providing bodies for other spirits equally anxious to come to the earth for righteous purposes. And so you will not postpone parenthood. There will be rationalists who will name to you numerous reasons for postponement. Of course, it will be harder to get your college degrees or your financial starts with a family, but strength like yours will be undaunted in the face of difficult obstacles. Have your family as the Lord intended. Of course it is expensive, but you will find a way, and besides, it is often those children who grow up with responsibility and hardships who carry on the world and its work.

And, John and Mary, do not limit your family as the world does.

Don’t think you will love the later ones less or have fewer material things for them. Perhaps, like Jacob, you might love the eleventh one most. Young folk, have your family, love them, sacrifice for them, teach them righteousness, and you will be blessed and happy all the days of your eternal lives. (49-01)

Have large families regardless of social norms. In America and elsewhere in the world, the family limitation program is gaining much strength. Latter-day Saints do not believe in this. We believe in following the admonition of the Lord in having large families and rearing them righteously. We hope that our Latter-day Saints will not trade children for accommodation and luxury.

When you go to the temple for sealing, you will note that the Lord continues to command his people to live this commandment. It is not easy. It is much easier to limit the family to one or two, but great blessings come to those who struggle through the years with the small children. When they have reared them righteously, they will have crowns throughout eternity. The time will come when those men and women who have neglected their duties because they wanted luxuries will be very jealous of the joys and happiness of those who sacrificed in the early years of marriage. Certainly we do not just wish to bring children in the world and turn them loose to go wild. We must rear them in righteousness. Generally, you will find that the people that come from the large families are generally the best trained and the most faithful. (62-04)

Motherhood and fatherhood are primary. Now, it is wise for every young woman to be grateful for her womanhood and her privilege to create, with her husband and the Eternal God as her partners. To be a mother, to be a wife of a good man—that a great joy! While she is waiting for that holy, sacred hour, let her be happy and content to develop her mind and accumulate knowledge and prepare herself emotionally and spiritually for the happy times.

For the young man, his education is important, his mission vital; but his proper marriage and his proper life to be a righteous father and to properly provide for and give leadership to a family—that is wonderful, a wonderful role in life to play. (74-27)

Motherhood is a noble work. Motherhood is a holy calling, a sacred dedication for carrying out the Lord’s work, a consecration and devotion to the rearing and fostering, the nurturing of body, mind, and spirit of those who kept their first estate and who came to this earth for their second estate to learn and be tested and to work toward godhood.

Mothers have a sacred role. They are partners with God, as well as with their own husbands, first in giving birth to the Lord’s spirit children, and then in rearing those children so they will serve the Lord and keep his commandments. Could there be a more sacred trust than to be a trustee for honorable, well-born, well-developed children?

So our beloved mother Eve began the human race with gladness, wanting children, glad for the joy that they would bring to her, willing to assume the problems connected with a family, but also the joys. (75-46)

To be a righteous woman during the winding-up scenes on this earth, before the Second Coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling. The righteous woman’s strength and influence today can be ten fold what it might be in more tranquil times. She has been placed here to help to enrich, to protect, and to guard the home—which is society’s basic and most noble institution. Other institutions in society may falter and even fail, but the righteous woman can help to save the home, which may be the last and only sanctuary some mortals know in the midst of storm and strife. (78-06)

I wish to say without equivocation that a woman will find no greater satisfaction and joy and peace and make no greater contribution to mankind than in being a wise and worthy woman and raising good children. (78-14)

When we sing that doctrinal hymn and anthem of affection, “O My Father,” we get a sense of the ultimate in maternal modesty, of the restrained, queenly elegance of our heavenly mother, and knowing how profoundly our mortal mothers have shaped us here, do we suppose her influence on us as individuals to be less if we live so as to return there?

God has placed women at the very headwaters of the human stream. So much of what our men and our institutions seek to do downstream in the lives of erring individuals is done to compensate for early failures. Likewise, so much of life’s later rejoicing is a reflection of a woman’s work well done at the headwaters of the home. (78-06)

Come home, wives, to your children, born and unborn. Wrap the motherly cloak about you and, unembarrassed, help in a major role to create bodies for the immortal souls who anxiously wait.

When you have fully complemented your husband in home life and borne the children, growing up full of faith, integrity, responsibility, and goodness, then you have achieved, your accomplishments supreme, without peer, and you will be the envy through time and eternity of your sisters who have spent themselves in selfish pursuits. (77-39)

Technology frees time for better child rearing. Today’s women, especially in the United States and some other countries, have ease, comfort, leisure, conveniences, and time, such as no other women in history have had.

What has she done with her new-found liberties and freedoms and opportunities and time? Has she perfected her own life? Is she more dutiful and faithful to her reduced home duties than was her great-grandmother with her multiplicity of arduous ones? Is today’s woman a better wife to her husband? Is the modern, electrically driven home of today a happier haven of refuge than the four walls of the last centuries? Is she today a better, more congenial neighbor than yesterday’s woman? Does she have more children now that she has more time, better facilities, and more help? Does she train her children better than her ancestors did?
Does she herself have more faith and piety than the women of old? And does she better instill into her children the faith which will make gods of them?

God bless the women, the wonderful women of every time and age and place, who establish first in their lives their Lord, his work, and their families. (58-01)

Women who are deliberately childless will regret it. I am not sorry for women who sacrifice their lives for children. I am not sorry for those women who have many children. But I am sorry ... for women who come to the Judgment Day who have never assumed the responsibility of rearing children, who have been afraid of pain, resistant to sacrifice. They are the ones whose hearts will be heavy.

I know there are many women who could not have children—God bless them! (54-03)

Childbearing should not be delayed for convenience. After marriage young wives should be occupied in bearing and rearing children. I know of no scriptures or authorities which authorize young wives to delay their families or to go to work to put their husbands through college. Young married couples can make their way and reach their educational heights, if they are determined. (74-21)

Supreme happiness in marriage is governed considerably by a primary factor—that of the bearing and rearing of children. Too many young people set their minds, determining they will not marry or have children until they are more secure, until the military service period is over; until the college degree is secured; until the occupation is more well-defined; until the debts are paid; or until it is more convenient. They have forgotten that the first commandment is to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.” (Genesis 1:28.) And so brides continue their employment and husbands encourage it, and contraceptives are used to prevent conception. Relatives and friends and even mothers sometimes encourage birth control for their young newlyweds. But the excuses are many, mostly weak. The wife is not robust; the family budget will not feed extra mouths; or the expense of the doctor, hospital, and other incidentals is too great; it will disturb social life; it would prevent two salaries; and so abnormal living prevents the birth of children. The Church cannot approve nor condone the measures which so greatly limit the family.

How do you suppose that the Lord would look upon a man and a woman whose marriage seems to be largely for the purpose of living together and sex gratification without the responsibilities of marriage? How do you think that the Lord looks upon those who use the contraceptives because in their selfish life it is not the convenient moment to bear children? How do you feel the Lord looks upon those who would trade flesh-and-blood children for pianos or television or furniture or an automobile, and is this not actually the case when people will buy these luxuries and yet cannot afford to have their children? Are there not numerous people who first buy the luxury article and then find they cannot pay the doctor or a hospital bill incident to childbirth?

How do you think the Lord feels about women who forego the pleasures and glories of motherhood that they might retain their figures, that their social life might not be affected, that they might avoid the deprivations, pains, and agonies of childbearing and birthing? How do you think the Lord feels as he views healthy parents who could have children but who deliberately close the doors by operation or by contraceptives, close the doors upon spirits eager to enter into mortal bodies? (77-39)

Not everyone can have children. We realize, of course, there are some women who cannot have children, some men who cannot reproduce. The Lord will take care of all that if we have done everything in our power, if we have done what we could to make ourselves normal and productive and to follow the commandments of the Lord. (74-39)

Few couples need remain childless. Men and women who have been unable to have children should build their faith. Many a barren woman like Sarah has had children through special blessings of the Lord. She was blessed in having a son—a son to a barren woman.

Sometimes operations or adjustments or hormones may make parenthood possible. Frequently fears and frictions and tenseness are causes for barrenness and sterility. Such people should do everything in their power to put themselves in a position to have their babies. Adoption of parentless children brings joy to many hearts. Few, if any, parents need be childless through their years. (77-39)

Mother’s health should be considered. In family life, men must and should be considerate of their wives, not only in the bearing of children, but in caring for them through childhood. The mother’s health must be conserved, and the husband’s consideration for his wife is his first duty, and self-control a dominant factor in all their relationships. (76-54)

Sterilization as a medical measure is a serious personal responsibility. On ... sterilization or other surgery to prevent conception ... the Church has felt that it was the individual responsibility of the couple; and while the Church leaves it to the individual to determine whether the ill health of the mother is sufficient to warrant the surgery which would make pregnancy impossible, yet it is a definite personal responsibility. In your case, since the surgery has already been completed, it cannot be undone, so it must be accepted as a fact and life can go on. Both parents should give themselves totally and fully to the rearing of their six children which they now have in a loving home with ideal surroundings. (12/16/64)

Sterilization to avoid the inconvenience of children is sinful. We marry for eternity. We are serious about this. We become parents and bring wanted children into the world and rear and train them to righteousness.

We are aghast at the reports of young people going to surgery to limit their families and the reputed number of parents who encourage this vasectomy. Remember that the coming of the Lord approaches, and some difficult-to-answer questions will be asked by a divine Judge who will be hard to satisfy with silly explanations and rationalizations. He will judge justly, you may be sure. (74-30)

Sterilization and tying of tubes and such are sins, and except under special circumstances it cannot be approved. (72-02)

The world can provide for growing population. Many people, some of them innocently caught up in the whirlpool of delusion errors, are worrying about the earth failing to provide for the oncoming generations. They take such means to influence the thinking of the people and repeat it so often that many of us were gullible and accepted it. We tend to believe what the world says. We often do not even ask what the Lord’s program is. (72-02)

Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 37.

Would we have a right to expect a perfect body [resurrection] if we carelessly or intentionally damaged it?

Spencer W. Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, Pg.218
A prominent speaker recently advocated free sex. He said,
“The revolution has been won. The new order has come into being. Sex is no longer a case of Shall I? but Can I? And the New Morality has codified the change.”

He speaks of the “erotic revolution.” Such sex revolutionists would make their own rules and would require acceptance of their erroneous way of life by society, without interference or controls. He leads a school of thought that would give contraceptive devices or birth control pills to everyone who asked for them regardless of age, and would offer free abortions. It is advocated that there be a “switching of wives on weekend parties.” He is quoted as saying that the young people are the most deprived, deprived of the right to build their own sexual lives. He says: “Tell your students for me, if they want freedom they are going to have to get it the same way the Negroes get it, by taking it and defying the law by civil disobedience. And every time they go out on a date and have sexual intercourse they are practicing civil disobedience.”

There is a defiance today in certain quarters of all that is holy—of all that the Lord has been teaching his offspring for these millennia.

Alexander Pope gave us these oft-quoted words:

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen;  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.


Bears in mind, dear sisters, that the eternal blessings, which are yours through membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are far, far greater than any other blessings you could possibly receive. No greater recognition can come to you in this world than to be known as a woman of God. No greater status can be conferred upon you than being a daughter of God who experiences true sisterhood, wifehood, and motherhood, or other tasks which influence lives for good.

True, there are some temporary differences and some constraining circumstances. Some of you have lost your husbands through death, others through divorce. Some of you have not yet had the great privilege of marriage. But, on the scale of eternity, the missing of these blessings “shall be but a small moment” (see D&C 121:7).

Be assured, too, that all faithful sisters, who, through no fault of their own, do not have the privilege during their second estate [mortality] of being sealed to a worthy man, will have that blessing in eternity. On occasions when you ache for that acceptance and affection which belong to family life on earth, please know that our Father in Heaven is aware of your anguish, and that one day he will bless you beyond your capacity to express.

Sometimes to be tested and proved requires that we be temporarily deprived — but righteous women and men will one day receive all — think of it, sisters — all that our Father has! It is not only worth waiting for, it is worth living for!...

Some women, because of circumstances beyond their control, must work. We understand that. We understand further that as families are raised, the talents God has given you and blessed you with can often be put to effective use in additional service to mankind. Do not, however, make the mistake of being drawn off into secondary tasks which will cause the neglect of your eternal assignments such as giving birth to and rearing the spirit children of our Father in Heaven. Pray carefully over all your decisions.

Joe J. Christensen, Ensign, November 1993, p. 11.

Although there are some uplifting exceptions, in most areas of the mass media there seems to be a declaration of war against almost everything the majority treasures most: the family, religion, and patriotism. Marriage is degraded, while premarital and extramarital relations are encouraged and glamorized. Profanity and the foulest of vulgar gutter language bombard the ears of all who listen. Reportedly, in one R-rated movie, the most common, vulgar, four-letter word was spoken 256 times! Human life itself is trivialized by the constant barrage of violence and killings. Remember that anything that is not good for children is rarely good for adults.

In an unsuccessful effort to ward off teen pregnancy and social disease, birth control devices are freely distributed. I am convinced that this practice strongly communicates the basic message to many youth that “anything goes; just protect yourself in the process.”

It is no wonder that young parents become very anxious as they attempt to fulfill their sacred trust in the face of such an onslaught of despicable influences. Unfortunately, these challenges confront members of the Church as well as nonmembers.

Parents who really want to receive assistance must return to the basics—the fundaments of the gospel.

Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 86 BIRTH CONTROL.

Today the cry is heard in some quarters that these statements calling upon parents to provide bodies for the spirit hosts of heaven are outmoded. Massive birth control programs are being sponsored on a national and international scale. Fears are expressed that the earth cannot support the number of people that unrestricted births will bring. But God’s decree and the counsel of the prophets remain unchanged. The real need is not to limit the number of earth’s inhabitants, but to learn how to care for the increasing hosts which the Lord designs should inhabit this globe before the last allocated spirit has been sent here to gain a mortal body. Amid all the cries and pressure of the world, the position of the true Church remains fixed. God has commanded his children to multiply and fill the earth, and the earth is far from full.

Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 726 SIGNS OF THE TIMES

33. LATTER-DAY WICKEDNESS. — Our Lord’s epigrammatic announcement, “Iniquity shall abound” (JS-M 1:30), as he described latter-day conditions, perfectly summarizes the prevailing world condition. Crime and licentiousness of every sort are the common diet of a large portion of the inhabitants of our globe. Murder, robbery, rape, whoresom, every form of sex immorality, and all forms of crimes against persons and property truly abound. Juvenile delinquency is a problem of substantial magnitude. Birth control is one of the great evils of the day. This is the time when the prediction of the Lord is fulfilled that men should say: “Blessed are the barren, and the wombs which never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.” (Luke 23:29.) And all these iniquities receive anything but deterrence from the common run of movies, radio and television broadcasts, comic books, and other cheap and degrading so-called literary efforts.

Neal A. Maxwell, Deposition of a Disciple, p. 39-41.

With regard to politics, incidentally, the First Presidency in 1968 made these observations:

“The historic position of the Church has been one which is
concerned with the quality of man’s contemporary environment as well as preparing him for eternity. In fact, as social and political conditions affect man’s behavior now, they obviously affect eternity.

The First Presidency went on to note that while the worldwide nature of the Church made it inadvisable for the Church to respond to all the emerging issues everywhere, this did not “absolve members as individuals from filling their responsibilities as citizens in their own communities … if our families are to live in an environment conducive to spirituality.” In that counsel, members were urged to be “anxiously engaged” in good causes, using the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ as their constant guide.

Second Questioner: But differences in values make such cooperation difficult. For instance, the Church’s stand on birth control makes the Church vulnerable, does it not, with regard to the immense problems created by the burgeoning population in the world? With whom can we cooperate on that?

The Disciple: With those who are like-minded, and there are such. The elements of the so-called population problem that are valid pose some real challenges in managing the earth’s resources. Unfortunately, several layers of hysteria and some high-flowing rhetoric have now buried other insights about the population problem. Latter-day Saints believe with regard to the earth’s resources that “there is enough and to spare.” (D&C 104:17.)

The problem, therefore, does not appear to be one solely of numbers of people, but of defective political, economic, and value systems. In a recent book, some Latter-day Saint scholars have offered some interesting conclusions concerning this matter. The book of compilations is titled Population, Resources, and the Future: Non-Malthusian Perspectives.

The editors, Howard M. Bahr, Bruce A. Chadwick, and Darwin I. Thomas, wrote: “If our assessment of the evidence is correct, millions of well-meaning, talented people will have been caught up in a movement which focused on the wrong variable.” The book discusses some of these other factors, which some, in their concern over numbers, tend to ignore.

Second Questioner: Please be specific, for this is a large issue.

The Disciple: Indeed it is. Too large to be dealt with here, but it is important to point out that the new Malthusians who focus almost exclusively on overpopulation run the risk of being unscientific (ignoring other objective facts) while calling for support in the name of science. The book noted calls forth some much-needed counterpoint to show that even if zero population growth were achieved, many of the problems related to population would still be with us.

I feel compelled to say that since in our discussion so much has been said to underscore the importance of free agency, distortions about the issue of overpopulation could take their toll in reducing human freedom and dignity, all in the name of an alarmed science.

Second Questioner: Would you cite one—even just one—of these other considerations you say are there?

The Disciple: I like the words of a non-LDS scholar, Fredrich, who said: “After all, children are not just transients in the world’s boardhouse, to be welcomed or turned away at the convenience of the older boarders. And if it is true that every newborn child should have a right to its share of food, it is also true that those who control the food supply should think twice before declaring that they no longer have enough for strangers and newcomers. In other words, the essence of the population problem—so far at least—is not that mankind has propagated too many children but that it has failed to organize a world in which they can grow in peace and prosperity. Rich nations and poor nations alike have grossly misused the world’s resources, both material and intellectual; neglected them, wasted them, and fought each other over how to share them. Thus the basic question is not how many people can share the earth, but whether they can devise any means of sharing it at all.”

Second Questioner: You are not dismissing the significance of the population challenge, then?

The Disciple: No. But I am saying that where freedom is involved we should always examine the data carefully. I am also dismissing the likelihood that secular solutions are automatically going to be real solutions to these challenges. Science must be as scrutinizing of its own dogmatists as of other dogmatists. Simple goodness, simple faith, simple brotherhood—these will yield more by way of solution than complex and clever plans resting on wrong assumptions. A righteous people who trust in God are far more apt to be blessed with the kind of weather and food and brotherhood that makes famine less likely and sharing more likely than are people who have dismissed the Fatherhood of God and who then make an empty plea for the brotherhood of man. Those who live unrighteously will bring upon themselves the very calamities about which they are complaining in advance.

Neal A. Maxwell, For the Power is in Them, p. 2

Strip-mining scars the landscape, causes floods, and leaves an economic emptiness which haunts the coming generations. Similarly, unchastity leaves terrible scars, brings floods of tears and anguish, and leaves a moral emptiness. Significantly, both strip-mining and unchastity rest on a life-style which partakes of an “eat, drink, and by merry” philosophy—gouge and grab now without regard to the consequences! Both strip-mining and unchastity violate the spirit of stewardship over our planet and over person. In such context, birth control pills are not a substitute for discipline. As one author observed, the coming of the pill may simply substitute a “copulation explosion for a population explosion.”

Hugh B. Brown, You and Your Marriage, pp. 133-135.

Too many people in this machine age seem to feel that children are a misfortune, an additional burden; in fact, someone has said, “Each child is for the mother a step toward the grave; for the father, a step toward bankruptcy; and for both, a step toward misery.” The fact is that the exact opposite of this is true. Women who have large families generally live longer than the unmarried or the childless. Biologically in many cases each child brings to the mother new vitality and to the father, because of the need for increased effort, greater earning power, and to both, if they assume their responsibilities with the proper attitude, there comes a happiness which the unmarried or the childless cannot know. …

Unfortunately there are some immature minds in mature or large bodies. There are some parents who have not matured mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, and yet little children are, for the time being at least, wholly subject to them…

If, then, to marry and rear children is a sacred mission, which is to continue throughout eternity, they who marry and deliberately deprive themselves of children not only disregard a divine injunction but deprive themselves of priceless blessings and that joy which is the real object of our being. …

Latter-day Saints believe in large families wherever it is possible to provide for the necessities of life, for the health and education of their children, and when the physical and mental health of the mother permits.
Harold B. Lee, Ye Are the Light of the World, pp. 266-267.

I speak of another matter closely related to this same subject [the human body; chastity], the disregard of which will unfit us for that “infinitude of immortality” for which we are in training. I speak of one of the most sacred of all human relationships, marriage, and that greatest of all institutions, the home. Marriage is fraught with the highest bliss and yet attended by the weightiest responsibilities that can devolve upon man and woman here in mortality. The divine impulse within every true man and woman that impels companionships with the opposite sex is intended by our Maker as a holy impulse for a holy purpose—not to be satisfied as a mere biological urge or as a lust of the flesh in promiscuous associations, but to be reserved as an expression of true love in holy wedlock. In the days of our grandparents, their great pride and joy was to rear a large and honorable family. In so doing, there was developed within the family circle an unselfishness and an individual and collective loyalty that made divorce a rare happening and therefore little thought of, in that day, as a solution for social ills.

There are those among us who think (if it can be called thinking) that having a large family of children is old-fashioned and an evidence of those who are unsophisticated and don’t know better. No more pernicious doctrine than that could hardly be imagined. Those who refuse to accept the obligations of parenthood are not living up to their greatest opportunities and thereby fail to gain the sweetest joys of life with a beautiful family. … Those who refuse as husbands and wives to have children are proving themselves already too small for the infinitude of God’s creative powers.


... you may have observed that the woman who lives at his [the successful sinner’s; one who is a follower of the ways of the world] house, whom he calls his wife, has completely ignored the first commandment “to multiply and replenish the earth.” She can’t be bothered with children; they might interfere with her career or her social activities. She thinks herself beyond the pale of the Church and quiets her conscience with the constant expression that after all, religion and the Church are only for the poor and the unsophisticated. The expenditure of her husband’s wealth has freed her from home responsibilities so that her days must be kept from monotony by bridge parties, and other functions where smoking and drinking are indulged in with little or no regard for Church injunctions to the contrary. She is able to dress in the latest and most expensive fashions; she avoids the telltale marks of a mother’s home duties, including worries about children.


The Lord has revealed that when a man and a woman are married according to his law, children born to them will be theirs throughout all eternity.

The covenant given to Adam to multiply was renewed after the flood with Noah and his children after him. The Lord said to Noah: “And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying. And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.”

This covenant is still binding, although mankind has departed from the way of eternal life and has rejected the covenant of marriage which the Lord revealed.

BIRTH CONTROL IS WICKEDNESS. The abuse of this holy covenant has been the primary cause for the downfall of nations.

When the sacred vows of marriage are broken and the real purpose of marriage abused, as we find it so prevalent in the world today, then destruction is inevitable.

No nation can endure for any length of time, if the marriage covenants are abused and treated with contempt. The anger of the Almighty is kindled against ancient nations for their immorality. There is nothing that should be held in greater sacredness than this covenant by which the spirits of men are clothed with mortal tabernacles.

When a man and a woman are married and they agree, or covenant, to limit their offspring to two or three, and practice devices to accomplish this purpose, they are guilty of iniquity which eventually must be punished. Unfortunately this evil doctrine is being taught as a virtue by many people who consider themselves cultured and highly educated. It has even crept in among members of the Church and has been advocated in some of the classes within the Church.

It should be understood definitely that this kind of doctrine is not only not advocated by the authorities of the Church, but also is condemned by them as wickedness in the sight of the Lord.

President Joseph F. Smith has said in relation to this question: “Those who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of parenthood are in training to do the work of God; they do not abuse the course of nature; that they do not destroy the principle of life within them, nor violate any of the commandments of God. The command which he gave in the beginning to multiply and replenish the earth is still in force upon the children of men. Possibly no greater sin could be committed by the people who have embraced this gospel than to prevent or to destroy life in the manner indicated. We are born into the world that we may have life, and we live that we may have a fulness of joy, and if we will obtain a fulness of joy, we must obey the law of our creation and the law by which we may obtain the consummation of our righteous hopes and desires—eternal life.”

SPIRITS DESIRE BIRTH IN RIGHTEOUS FAMILIES. President Brigham Young has this to say about birth control, an abomination practiced by so-called civilized nations, but nations who have forsaken the ways of life:

“There are multitudes of pure and holy spirits waiting to take tabernacles, now what is our duty? To prepare tabernacles for them; to take a course that will not tend to drive those spirits into the families of the wicked, where they will be trained in wickedness, debauchery, and every species of crime. It is the duty of every righteous man and woman to prepare tabernacles for all the spirits they can.”

If these iniquitous practices find their place in our hearts and we are guilty, then when we arrive on the other side—and discover that we have deprived ourselves of eternal blessings and are accused by those who were assigned to come to us, because, as President Young has said, they were forced to take bodies in the families of the wicked—how will we feel? Moreover, may we not lose our own salvation if we violate this divine law?

BIRTH CONTROL LEADS TO DAMNATION. Instructing the mothers of the Church, President Joseph F. Smith said in June, 1917: “I regret, I think it is a crying evil, that there should exist a sentiment or a feeling among any members of the Church to curtail the birth of their children. I think that is a crime wherever it occurs, where husband and wife are in possession of health and vigor and are free from impurities that would be entailed upon their posterity. I believe that where people undertake to curtail or prevent the birth of their children that they are going to reap disappointment by and by. I have no hesitancy in saying that I
believe that is one of the greatest crimes of the world today, this evil practice.”

When young people marry and refuse to fulfill this commandment given in the beginning of the world—and just as much in force today—they rob themselves of the greatest eternal blessing. If the love of the world and the wicked practices of the world mean more to a man and a woman than to keep the commandment of the Lord in this respect, then they shut themselves off from the eternal blessing of increase. Those who wilfully and maliciously design to break this important commandment shall be damned. They cannot have the Spirit of the Lord.

Small families is the rule today. Husbands and wives refuse to take upon themselves the responsibilities of family life. Many of them do not care to be bothered with children. Yet this commandment given to Adam has never been abrogated or set aside. If we refuse to live by the covenants we make, especially in the house of the Lord, then we cannot receive the blessings of those covenants in eternity. If the responsibilities of parenthood are wilfully avoided here, then how can the Lord bestow upon the guilty the blessings of eternal increase? It cannot be, and they shall be denied such blessings.

David O. McKay, Gospel Ideals, pp. 468-469.

Any effort or desire on the part of a married couple to shirk the responsibility of parenthood reflects a condition of mind antagonistic to the best interests of the home, the state, and the nation. No doubt there are some worldly people who honestly limit the number of children and the family to two or three because of insufficient means to clothe and educate a large family as the parents would desire to do, but in nearly all such cases, the two or three children are no better provided for than two or three times that number would be. Such parents may be sincere, even if misguided; but in most cases the desire not to have children has its birth in vanity, passion, and selfishness. Such feelings are the seeds sown in early married life that produce a harvest of discord, suspicion, estrangement, and divorce. All such efforts, too, often tend to put the marriage relationship on a level with the panderer and the courtesan. They befoul the pure fountains of life with the slime of indulgence and sensuality. Such misguided couples are and the courtesan. They befoul the pure fountains of life with the slime of indulgence and sensuality. Such misguided couples are and the courtesan.

Depriving themselves of the comfort and happiness of the companionship of children, the barrenness of their lives drives the young couple to seek the hollow fads and fascinating excitements of “society,” many of which pursuits are as antagonistic to the real purpose of life as the influence of evil can make them.

As I write these lines, I have in mind a young girl who has substituted for the reality of home and family, the froth of weekend parties and midnight carousals, including the most degrading but fashionable habit of cigarette smoking. She began her married life in honor and is the mother of two beautiful children; but she was caught in the whirlpool of pleasure and passion, and though flaunting daily the latest fashions, is sinking from respectability to degradation. “O what a falling off were here!” I cannot look upon such actions of young husbands and wives without a feeling of pity mingled with contempt. There is comfort only in the thought that in our communities such cases are exceptional.

Love realizes his sweetest happiness and his most divine consummation in the home where the coming of children is not restricted, where they are made most welcome, and where the duties of parenthood are accepted as a co-partnership with the eternal Creator.

In all this, however, the mother’s health should be guarded. In the realm of wifehood, the woman should reign supreme.

Man, not woman, is the chief cause of this evil of race suicide now sweeping like a blight through the civilized nations.

David O. McKay, Gospel Ideals, p. 487.

Infidelity and sexual immorality are two principal evils that threaten to weaken and to wreck present-day civilization. Unfortunately, the trends of modern life are tending to disintegrate the very foundation of the Christian home. Sexual laxity among young people, birth control, and intemperance are its insidious and vicious enemies. When family life disintegrates, the foundation and bulwark of human society is undermined.—CR, October 1947, p. 119.

Mark E. Petersen, The Way to Peace, p. 266.

In this birth control effort man places himself in direct opposition to the plan and laws of God.

A. Theodore Tuttle, Conference Report, October 1969, pp. 131-132 “Help for the family”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is organized to help the family. No other organization provides more help. The whole program of the Church is correlated to supplement the teachings of the home. The Church speaks out boldly against the common evil of this day—the deliberate limiting of families by birth control. It teaches, rather, the sacred obligation resting upon husband and wife to bring children into the world.

John A. Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, pp. 310-314

This is an insistent subject. It raises at least three vital questions: Why should married people want to practice birth control? What is the effect on those who practice it? Are large families desirable?

Ill health may make birth control necessary. A weakened body or actual disease may justify protection of the mother and the unborn child against any further physiological burden. However, for those of sound health, who conform to the laws of nature, child bearing promotes physical well-being. As a rule, women who have large families are healthy throughout life.

A more frequent cause of birth control is real or fancied economic pressure. Under modern conditions requiring the services of an obstetric physician and hospital care, the husband and wife of moderate means hesitate to incur this added draft upon their resources. And, often they delay the coming of children because they prefer first to pay for and enjoy the house or piano or automobile or refrigerator or radio-phonograph, or other desirable but not indispensable things. Married students sometimes feel that if they have children they must forego or greatly delay the completion of their educations. In one form or another the economic excuse is a common one.

Others practice birth control because they feel that the care of having children consumes their time and strength, and therefore interferes with social or professional ambitions. They want to be free to “live life as they choose.” To this class belong those who absurdly declare that they look for quality instead of quantity and therefore limit the size of their families.

The having of children and the rearing of a family entail expense, especially while the children are young. That goes without saying. Yet, the economic excuse for birth control is seldom convincing. A way is usually found to meet family costs,
if the desire for children is stronger than for the new piano, let us say. Sacrifices for a time on the part of the parents and on the part of the older children if there be any, will usually provide the necessary means. The economic excuse roots, in the majority of cases, in selfishness. Yet, it should be said that society, which benefits from its citizens, should make provisions by which the expense incident to motherhood would be within the reach of the poorest.

Those who practice birth control to further their personal ambitions are of course motivated wholly by selfishness. They might well be asked why they married.

Birth control when necessary should be accomplished in nature’s way, which does not injure the man or the woman. A careful recognition of the fertile and sterile periods of woman would prove effective in the great majority of cases. Recent knowledge of woman’s physiology reveals “the natural method for controlling birth.” This method “violates no principle of nature.

Birth control as generally understood implies the use of physical or chemical means to prevent conception. A large number of these devices, known as contraceptives, are on the market. None of them is certain to accomplish the purpose desired. Besides, any contraceptive is unnatural and interferes in one way or another with the physiological processes of life. All of them are in varying degrees injurious to those who use them, especially to women. That may be safely contended. The ill effects may not be felt at once, but in time will overtake the parents to their detriment.

Moreover, since birth control roots in a species of selfishness, the spiritual life of the user of contraceptives is also weakened. Women seem to become more masculine in thought and action; men more callous and reserved; both husband and wife become more careless of each other, and increasingly indifferent to the higher duties and joys of living.

The quality versus quantity contention is a fallacy. The only necessary means of the older children if there be any, will usually provide the parents to their detriment. The shaping of character which goes on in a loving household of many children he receives less effectively from less friendly strangers. He misses many of the joys and pleasures of childhood which are possible only in a family of several children. He often becomes inordinately selfish if all gifts and consideration of father and mother are centered in him. The effect of a lone childhood is felt throughout life. The unspoken, unrealized longings for family intimacies are frequently reflected in foiled attempts to make up for the lost experience of childhood and youth. As the years creep on, he misses more and more the intimate understanding and affectionate sympathy which accompany blood relationships. The only child is likely to remain lonely throughout the journey of life. The same might be said measurably of two children several years apart.

Large families are the most genuinely happy. That is the verdict of human experience. In such a family circle there is steady development and joyful living for parents and children. The Psalmist spoke wisely when he said: “Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.” (Psalm 127:5)

A home with several children of varying ages approximates the social situations to be met in later life. There the possibilities of life may be experienced in miniature form. Under the loving protection of father and mother, in games and contests, in the exchange of wits, in sacrifices for one another in mutual rejoicing and sorrows, in discussions of family affairs and daily happenings, the business of living in a world of many men is taught. The home with a family of children becomes a laboratory for learning the importance of truth, virtue, and honesty, industry, and the ethical and religious bases of conduct. And, since love for one another tempers and directs all that is done, the children will enter the world’s citizenship better fitted to help build an increasingly improving world. In the training of good citizens or happy human beings, there is no substitute for the home with a large family.

The benefits of a home with several children is not confined to the children. Parents are perhaps equally benefited. Parents who have children show their willingness to accept obligations of good citizenship. They have faith in the future. They dare to continue the race. They are not ashamed to perpetuate themselves. Thereby they win strength to perform other duties of life. Besides, in the rearing of children there is real development of father and mother, a development which can be won in no other way. There is also a supreme satisfaction in presenting men and women, sons and daughters, to the coming age, to carry on the work of the world.

Every parent lives on in his descendants. Above all, is the joy of family life. Father, mother and children perhaps grandchildren, at the table, or at play, in family councils, share in divine satisfactions. It has been so ordained that the family comes nearest to the heavenly pattern in organization and joys. And, these joys continue into old age. Loneliness is banished. The childless couple miss much in life; and as the years move on the sense of loss becomes keener. The finest, most important, and happiest institution on earth is the family, composed of father, mother and children.

The future of the state and of the race depends upon the willingness of its citizens to beget and rear children without artificial interference. During the last centuries mankind has learned much. The comforts and blessings in every modest home surpass those of the emperors of old. Who shall inherit these gifts and the others in process of making? – Our children, of course, if we have any, and if they are numerous enough to claim consideration. It is a cruel fact, to which we must give heed, that those most highly prepared to enjoy and advance our civilization have a decreasing birthrate; while those of less training, or perhaps inferior gifts, continue fruitful. Many a college class of picked men and women half a century after graduation have fewer children than the original number of the class. It takes more than two children to keep the population from decreasing. The worldwide view is the same. The birthrate of the more advanced nations is falling rapidly; while that of the more backward peoples is large and increasing.

In the last twenty-five years, the birthrate of the United States has fallen from twenty-five to seventeen per thousand of population. In 1941 in the United States the births did not quite equal the deaths; while in Japan the births exceeded the deaths by one-half. Time (Sept. 14, 1942) reports that Great Britain has a million and half fewer babies, and a million and a half more pet dogs than at the time of the Boer War. If there is no change, they whom we are inclined to call semi-civilized or barbarians will take over the earth. The survival of our civilization may yet depend on an increasing birthrate in the nations which have made that civilization possible.

Latter-day Saints take literally the command of the Lord to the first couple: “Multiply, and replenish the earth.” (Genesis 1:28) That is the purpose of marriage and means more than one or two children. We understand that hosts of waiting spirits desire to
come on earth through our lineage. We know that the family is the unit of heavenly society; and that the greatest gift of God is to give His children the opportunity of continuing family relationships throughout the eternities. Are they who will not obey the law on earth worthy of this great reward in the hereafter? Gospel doctrine should make every Latter-day Saint married couple eager for the privilege and obligations of parenthood. And they should have the faith and trust that the Lord will provide the means for obeying His law.

*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 197.

To check the increase of our race has its advocates among the influential and powerful circles of society in our nation and in other nations. The same practice existed forty-five years ago, and various devices were used by married persons to prevent the expenses and responsibilities of a family of children, which they must have incurred had they suffered nature’s laws to rule preeminent. That which was practiced then in fear and against reproving conscience, is now boldly trumpeted abroad as one of the best means of ameliorating the miseries and sorrows of humanity. Infanticide is very prevalent in our nation. It is a crime that comes within the purview of the law, and is therefore not so boldly practiced as is the other equally great crime, which, no doubt, to a great extent, prevents the necessity of infanticide. The unnatural style of living, the extensive use of narcotics, the attempts to destroy and dry up the fountains of life, are fast destroying the American element of the nation; it is passing away before the increase of the more healthy, robust, honest, and less sinful class of the people which are pouring into the country daily from the Old World. The wife of the servant man is the mother of eight or ten healthy children, while the wife of his master is the mother of one or two poor, sickly children, devoid of vitality and constitution, and, if daughters, unfit, in their turn, to be mothers, and the health and vitality which nature has denied them through the irregularities of their parents are not repaired in the least by their education. 12:120-121.


From what we have heard we are led to believe that the spirit is abroad in the earth, and is making some headway among the Latter-day Saints, to look with reproach upon women with large families, and the desire seems to be growing among some of the younger population, to desire only one or two, and not to exceed three, children. We have heard that many of the diabolical practices of the world have been introduced … among some who profess to be Latter-day Saints, to prevent the bearing of children. No sin, unless it be that of murder, will meet with a greater condemnation from God than this evil of tampering with the fountains of life. Such sins will destroy the strength of any people that practices them, and the nation whose people yield to such vices is in great danger of destruction. No Saint can practice or encourage such corruption without incurring the displeasure of an offended God. (15 July 1895, *JI* 30:451.)

I refer to the practice of preventing the birth of children. I want to lift my voice in solemn warning against this, and I say to you that the woman who practices such devilish arts, or the man who consents to them, will be cursed of God. Such persons will be cursed in their bodies, cursed in their minds, cursed in their property, cursed in their offspring. God will wipe them out from the midst of this people and nation. Remember it.

Mothers, teach this to you daughters, for I tell you it is true. I need not pronounce any curse, whatever my authority may be, but I say unto you that women who take this course, and men who consent to it, will be cursed of God Almighty, and it will rest upon them until their generation shall be blotted out, and their name shall be lost from the midst of the Saints of God unless, as I have said, there is deep, thorough and heartfelt repentance. (7 October 1894, *DW* 49:739.)