



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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TO VARSITY SCOUTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 1996 MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE:

Young men, you are to be congratulated this evening as you gather around campfires on mountaintops all across the Western United States. Many of you are tired, possibly a little hungry, and I would venture to say there are a few aching, blistered feet among you. However, I can assure you that this is an evening you will never forget.

Thousands of young men from all walks of life in several different states working toward a mutual goal -- your total effort performed today truly epitomizes the Scouting spirit.

Your efforts remind me of the story of Boy Scouts in Washington state who chose to climb Mt. Rainier in the early spring. Like your journey today their's was a lengthy affair. Late in the afternoon, the Scouts and leaders were greeted by a large shaded area that still had snow left over from the winter.

Not far from the top, several Scouts and leaders began to frolic and enjoy the refreshment the snow offered them; however, they had not yet reached their goal -- the top. Most the Scouts and a few leaders were not inclined to continue the journey. But a few Scouts and one leader persevered and reached the summit as the sun was setting. They were not only able to bask in the beauty of the sunset, but more importantly, in the knowledge of accomplishing their goal.

I know the *Scout Law* plays an integral role in each and every one of your lives. Traits like bravery, cleanliness, loyalty and honesty are not easy ideals to live up to. I commend you for your adherence to these principles in today's turbulent world.

The last principle enumerated in the *Scout Law* is REVERENCE. It is not last because it is the least important, but rather it serves as the base of the eleven other traits that precede it. Without reverence toward God and faithfulness to religious duties, the other traits cease to have importance. As you have time this evening to ponder today's activities, I would counsel you to reinforce your commitments to God and renew your dedication to the Scouting principles.

Set lofty goals that are difficult to attain and remain close to God and your lives will surely be filled with great happiness.

Again, congratulations on your mountaintop feat. Good Luck to each of you!

Yours in Scouting,

J. Carey Keane
National Director
Relationships/Marketing Group