

Heber C. Kimball expressed a thought when he said:

I do not know that this can be found in the Bible, but it is just as good and true.

Thought, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is to the Latter-day Saints the most sacred thing in the world. Oliver Cowdery, however gifted, did not understand the great secret of thought and study. He supposed that the Lord would give it unto him when he took no thought save it was to ask. But the Word of the Lord came to him:

Behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore you shall feel that it is right.

Jesus gives a perfect answer:

My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

We have men who can look into the future. Men of vision is what the world needs. Three thousand years ago it was written: "Where there is no vision the people perish."

Today, at the dawn of the twentieth century, we, as Latter-day Saints, are in sore need of a vision of the future which will uplift us above and beyond the petty, sordid interests of the moment, viz: That money devil, intemperance, and immorality, are some of the evils which are lying right across the highway of our future. It is riches, automobiles, oriental rugs, fashion, social functions, class distinction, and other worldly things that appeal to our covetousness more than just doing right, for they are advertised better and have a stronger appeal to our sordid natures.

Brethren and sisters, I have been in this work a long time. I pray God that I may have his Spirit always. There is only one way for me to get out of this Church, and that is by doing wrong. I hope I shall never live long enough or say anything that there will be taken from me that which I have. God bless you, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A solo and Chorus, "Ave Maria," was sung by Emma Lucy Gates Bowen and the Singing Mothers.

ELDER REED SMOOT

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

In contemplating the attitude of the Latter-day Saints as a body of religious worshipers towards their fellowmen, my mind is led in serious reflection to the great mission on which we lay a divinely authorized claim. We present ourselves as messengers of life and salvation under the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to all with whom we come in contact.

We fit our calling to the present day, this scripturally known Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, our claim is that we are divinely commissioned to perform Gospel ordinances in the name and by the authority of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the living God.

FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES

We particularly lay stress today upon a culminating feature of the Gospel revelation for the salvation of the living and of the dead of God's children who have dwelt on the earth in ages past. We point out that through the channel of divine revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, that culminating feature was in fulfillment of God's promise recorded in the closing words of the Old Testament, that he would send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord to turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers. In proof of the validity of our claim we cite, among other things:

1. That the present disturbed condition of the world, more general than ever known before, is evidence of the great and dreadful day of the Lord now being upon us.

WORK FOR THE DEAD

2. That early in the present dispensation of the Gospel, and now about a century ago, the Prophet Elijah did come; and that following that coming, the genealogical researchers have grown to millions in number among the civilized peoples of the earth, and are seeking records of their ancestors back to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

3. That in the temples of the Latter-day Saints, and among that people only, are performed the higher Gospel ordinances for the salvation of the living and of the dead of ages past.

4. That while those ordinances are no part of the strictly Mosaic law, they are a necessary part of the fulness of the Gospel for this age and time, and for the dead who have died without law as well as for the living today, as resultant upon the statement of Jesus of Nazareth: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25.) The reason for this is given by the Apostle Peter: "For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Peter 4:6.)

To my mind this is a serious, a marvelous claim, carrying not only to the Church as a body, but to the individual members thereof, a stupendous and weighty responsibility which cannot be lightly turned aside. In early days, now nearly thirty-three centuries ago, those children of Israel who had come out of Egypt, and were traveling in the desert between that place and their promised land, failed in a

degree to meet the requirements of the higher Priesthood law, and were placed under the lesser law known as the Mosaic covenant.

UNDER THE HIGHER PRIESTHOOD

But such is not the case with the Latter-day Saints. We are under the covenant with Christ, which is the higher Priesthood, and are amenable thereto in our individual as well as in our collective capacity. The authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood is conferred upon us. The ordinances of that higher Priesthood are ours. The requirements of its responsibilities are upon us individually, and admit of no justifiable evasion on our part. They come under the explicit saying of the Savior: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.)

Jesus further said to his disciples:

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

These things I command you, that ye love one another. (John 15:12-17).

FREE AGENCY

Men have their free agency. Under the full and proper exercise thereof, they are free to think, free to act within reasonable restrictions. This freedom of agency places upon them the responsibility of both thought and action as individuals. Their opportunity is to choose to follow either the good or the evil in life. Those of us who have aligned ourselves sincerely with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have made choice of the good, and have become messengers of salvation in ourselves and to others. We have become followers of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. As such followers, integrity of word and deed should be the cornerstone of our efforts.

NECESSITY OF LABOR

To be a true disciple of Jesus, we must needs be workers in his great cause. It is said in one of the Proverbs, "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings." This necessity of labor is a mainspring in what we call progress by individuals as well as in civilization. To labor, to actually, definitely labor in the cause of Christ produces its effects in righteous growth and development. The Apostle Peter once said to believers in his day: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." (1 Peter 2:9.) A "do-nothing" people cannot fill that calling. Industry, integrity, application, self-respect, in the spiritual as well as in

the material things of life, are essential qualities. "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

In the quotation here made from the Apostle John's record of the sayings of Christ, two elements may be selected for definite thought. One of these is that in and of our own volition, we assume the responsibility of doing something ourselves, rather than be always seeking to depend wholly upon the advice and direction of others. This advice is timely in degree, but it has its limit in often burdening others beyond necessity. In proper degree it is timely in that it complies with the design of Providence. Yet let us remember that the inspiration of the Holy Ghost for us to proceed upon our own individual initiative is worth something; and acting under that inspiration is an obligation aptly expressed by the Apostle James: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Wherein we seek over-guidance or over-government from human sources, we develop in ourselves a tendency to helplessness. That which is put into us by others is always far less ours than that which we acquire by our own diligent and persevering effort. It is not luck nor accident that helps a man in the world so much as purpose and persistent industry.

These aphorisms are among those which, so far as my ability to apply them in my own life has been concerned, have been to me of great and durable value. But to be of the highest value, we must remember our duty and service to God. That is the supreme calling which the Latter-day Saints have accepted and assigned to themselves in the choice they have made within their free agency. By thus assuming our individual responsibility, our example becomes not only helpful to others, but definitely removes us from the classification indicated in the verdict: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. 7:19-20.) Those Latter-day Saints who have the spirit of their calling aim to bring forth good fruit in the Gospel of Christ, materially and spiritually. Therein they do manifest their love for their fellowmen as the love of Christ comes into their hearts.

Jesus himself found occasion to lay particular stress upon the individual responsibility for action by those who professed his name. He thus did so in these words: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. * * * Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14, 16.)

SOME ACHIEVEMENTS

It is in the history of the Latter-day Saints that they have done much in harmony with this divine injunction. In a spiritual way, they have engaged in extensive missionary service for bringing souls into the fold of Christ. Yet it cannot be said that they have been idle in helpful

material things. Since coming to these valleys, now nearly eighty-seven years ago, they have been wonderful colonists; their mission of colonization has opened up to an advanced civilization this intermountain country, from their settlements in Canada to their settlements in Mexico, as well as easterly and westerly to a considerable extent. Individually and collectively they have established and carried on home industries which reach into every city and hamlet, bringing useful and congenial employment in the production of life's necessities and comforts. By both individual and cooperative effort they have developed irrigation projects that aid in "subduing the earth" in this intermountain region, until it has become desirable for man's habitation. By similar effort they have encouraged educational institutions and an educational system of which any community may be proud. By their moral training of both young and old, they have attained a standing in character that is an honor to the commonwealth. As temple builders they have adopted different types of architecture into a class of strikingly beautiful edifices regarded as especially sacred. As a community of home-makers they have brought to comfortable homes thousands of families from the civilized nations, and have molded those people of different tongues and nationalities into a uniform community sentiment. Yet, in their responsibilities under the higher law of the Gospel which they have received, these achievements are not at an end. They are just begun, to be continued until the Zion of God is established in the land, as the Lord has foretold through his prophets. Their work as individuals may be humbly done, but in righteousness it is age-during, to the glory of the God of Israel whom they seek to serve.

As Jesus invited his followers anciently to voluntary and cooperative effort for all good, so in this dispensation he has given explicit instruction which applies to such voluntary action by each Church member. On one occasion, he expressed such lesson in these words:

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.

Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.

But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned. (D. & C. 58:26-29.)

RESULTS FOLLOWING NEGLECT

Yet it is wise to recall that sometimes, in our own human weakness, we become neglectful even of our supreme obligations. As told in Bible history, the Israel of olden time did this on different occasions, and called forth reprimands therefor. Our knowledge of such instances may serve as warnings to us, to avoid similar mistakes, and to keep the Gospel light shining within our hearts. The Israel of the Book of Mormon record also had occasions of neglect. The book of Helaman in the

Book of Mormon makes record of such event, wherein the words of that writer present a timely lesson to us, were we to become neglectful of God's word. The writer says that the people to whom he refers had been prospered "in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art." They also had been relieved from the active antagonism of their enemies, and presented a scene of "exceedingly great prosperity." Then they became lifted up in pride, and were given to boasting. When in their situation of ease, they began to forget God, they fell under affliction arising from their own neglect of responsibility to the divine word. The historian then goes on to say of them:

Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them; notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide. (Helaman 12:6.)

REMEMBER THE LORD

In these days of distorting the plain words of scripture, of atheistic teachings, of chaotic social propaganda, and of general economic uncertainty, it may be well for us, in our private contemplation, to give at least a passing heed to the conditions cited in the Book of Mormon, and for us to seek more earnestly than ever to remember God, that his blessings and protecting care may come to us still more abundantly in our time of special need, such as seems to be upon us today. Though the efforts of men may be frustrated, God's promise does not fail wherein he says to those who draw near to him: "I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you." (Lev. 26:9.) It is our own responsibility, individually as well as collectively, to thereby gain our own welfare, and the welfare of others, under our divine call in this age.

FRIENDS OF JESUS

Referring again to the quotation hereinbefore made from the Apostle John's record of the sayings of Christ, a second element for present definite thought is in the Savior's words: "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. * * * These things I command you, that ye love one another." This command to "love one another" was not narrowed to family or social relationships, or even to Church memberships. Its scope was broad indeed, for bringing the Gospel message to all who would give heed. Jesus himself thus explains it:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? (Matt. 5:43-47; 3 Nephi 13:44, 45.)

In the present hectic discussions of religious and social questions especially, it is well to be careful in personal criticisms, that we may not be unjust. There may be faults, but who is without them? These can be corrected without either growing angry or scolding each other. The scold may make an enemy, but never a convert. Sometimes we meet the suggestion that Jesus himself administered severe rebuke to certain persons. (Matt. 23:15.) He did more. He denounced them. They were seeking his life, and the lives of his followers. It was open warfare. It was his affair, not ours. Theirs were the grosser sins. To us he says: "Judge not."

As Latter-day Saints we wish to be recognized, and to be in reality as friends of Jesus, by keeping his commandments. That is the condition he has prescribed. Even our little Sunday School children are taught his command "that ye love one another," and to "oft speak kind words to each other." For myself, I do sincerely trust that as Latter-day Saints, whether of high or low degree in membership, yet all being under the Gospel law in the covenant with Christ, we will seek diligently and honestly to speak kind words to and of each other, that the love of God, the love of our associate members in the Church and the love of our fellowmen may increase among us for the furtherance of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Let us not forget the divinely given words which I have quoted to you today, and also the further words of our Lord:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:37-40.)

May the grace of the Father and his boundless love be with you evermore, is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER MILES L. JONES

President of the East Central States Mission

I feel my weakness, my brethren and sisters, in standing before you this afternoon, realizing, as I do, the great responsibility that rests upon those who undertake to speak in the name of the Lord.

I am indeed happy to report to you this afternoon the activities of the East Central States Mission. I am pleased to say that the missionaries are enjoying good health. They are enjoying their labors. There are new fields being opened up from time to time, and they have the privilege and the opportunity of explaining the Gospel to many people, and many are being brought to a knowledge of the truth, and are receiving the ordinance of baptism by immersion, for the remission of sins;