

restraints, the hopes and the satisfactions that my soul can desire. I thank God for the Church of Christ with all its agencies, facilities and powers to make the Gospel effective in the lives of men and women. I look forward with confidence to the fulfilment of the promises of the Lord. In the face of many problems I am not discouraged—the truth will prevail. We must be patient in all things, but we must also be vigilant. Patience and vigilance and integrity will see us out. I pray for the blessings of God on the Church, on the Government and on all men, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER JOHN H. TAYLOR

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I humbly pray, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord will bless me during the few moments that I am before you, that I might say correctly the things that I have a desire to say to you this afternoon.

Our Heavenly Father has greatly blessed us by giving to us many books that we might learn of his ways and his desires concerning us; that we might be able to find our way safely back into his kingdom after finishing our work here. In addition he has also given to us his prophet and his servants that they might give us, from time to time, additional word and counsel and instruction to that which we find written in the standard works of the Church.

The scriptures have not only been given for our benefit but they have been given for the good of all of the children of God here upon the earth. They are encouraged to read them that they might better understand God's purposes towards them and towards life; to make the present finer and more beautiful so that the future might bring increased joy and happiness.

At times it seems to me that because of the many scriptures available, they have become very common to us. When problems of life come before us we are prone to look to other sources for comfort, knowledge, and instruction, rather than going to the word of the Lord, where we might be guided rightly in the things that he wants us to do.

We are always having problems of religion before us, and I am sure that we always shall. This word of the Lord which has been given to us helps us to tread the straight and narrow path and keep close to our Heavenly Father. It is interesting, and I am sure profitable, that we should be up-to-date; but it is more important that we be right, even at the expense of up-to-dateness.

As I meet people I find there is a tendency to so interpret the scriptures that they will fit into all of the new theories, especially the so-called learning and intelligence that has not been established. Very frequently people in trying to fit these theories into the word of the Lord make the interpretations of our scriptures silly, and in many cases dangerous, leading men and women astray

because their new interpretation is not what God meant when he wrote and spoke to his prophets and gave his words to us in the holy scriptures.

We sometimes wonder why more people are not coming into the Church nowadays, and we refer back in kindly remembrance to the many people who joined the Church in early days. I think I can name one reason. In the early days people of all the earth—I mean those who were Christians—were readers of the scriptures. They tried to find comfort and knowledge in this holy book, the Bible. They believed sincerely in the revealed word of God and when the missionaries came to them in their kindness and with their explanation of the additional word of God, they could see and understand their mistakes and readily adjust themselves to the new interpretation that had come in relation to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And so, many people came into the Church.

Nowadays we are getting away from that. It is not the custom to read the word of the Lord, and while we may find testimony, I believe that testimony would come quicker if we would be firmer in the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; if we would be frequent readers of God's word to us, and really believe the things which he has said and does say to us.

I believe many of these religious problems that come to us can be solved. For example, we have the question of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We know that Adam was an intelligent man. How do we know it? By the written word of God; there is no question about it. Mark you, I said an intelligent man, and not a man who was just evolving from a crude state into one of intelligence. All of our reading and all of our contact with God and his prophecies give us to understand that Adam was an intelligent man and was the father of our race. We read of him in the Bible, and we read of him again in the Pearl of Great Price, where practically the same story is reiterated. We read about him again in the Book of Mormon and in the Doctrine and Covenants.

It seems to me that this question should not bother us as a people when we have so much of the revealed word of God concerning this matter. In the Book of Mormon, Lehi makes the statement: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy."

There is no question about it, you see, as far as we are concerned. And the continual argument and debate about a subject like this it seems to me would be displeasing to our Heavenly Father.

We have the question of the Christ, his virgin-birth, and his resurrection. We find it contained in all of our books. Yet there are men and women and young people who do not believe, and they argue the question back and forth as to who he really was, whether or not he was in reality resurrected from the dead, and stands at the right hand of God.

Perhaps you remember the occasion when Jacob was debating

the question with Sherem concerning the Christ, and Jacob said to him, "Believest thou the scriptures?" Do you not see the first test—the prophets' test, God's test? It was right there—"Believest thou the scriptures?" And when Sherem said, "Yea," Jacob said:

Then ye do not understand them; for they truly testify of Christ. Behold, I say unto you that none of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ.

When the Lord was speaking to the Jews he said:

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

The Jews, with the books before them could not understand. Paul said that we can not understand the things of God without the Spirit of God. And so even with the scriptures before us; if we will not show the signs of humility and of repentance, and a desire to know, we can not understand the things which are written in these books for us.

In the Book of Mormon we have a challenge, as we have in the Bible. The Prophet Moroni said that if the Book of Mormon was read with a certain purpose, with the proper attitude towards the book, then God, by his Spirit, would enable the reader to understand whether the book was the word of God or not.

May the Lord bless us, my brethren and sisters, that we will commence to pay more attention to the holy scriptures, that we may go to them to solve the problems as they come into our lives, because I am confident that within the books of God, in addition to what comes to us from our prophet, we can ascertain what God wants us to do, how far we shall go, and how we can please him from day to day. May he bless us to this end, that we might obtain additional light and comfort and blessing and eventually find our way into his kingdom, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

## ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

My beloved brethren and sisters, as I stand before you this afternoon I desire an interest in your faith and prayers. I hardly know what I shall be able to say, but I thank the Lord for the faith that he has given me in the Gospel, of which we are participants. I thank him that I can look into the future with reliance and faith, believing that he stands back of the purposes of this Church, and that he will guide it through, that he will give those of us who are faithful and rely upon him the power and the capacity to carry on.

I believe that there exists in this body of Priesthood that we have before us today, a peculiar power and virtue, a reservoir of power, from which we derive our authority in doing the things we do as representatives of this people. I believe that it is by virtue of that authority which is vested in the people that the officers of this Church conduct its affairs in all this world.