

ought to give great consideration to the advancement, welfare and functioning of these young men in the various labors and duties that they are called to fulfil, that they may measure up to high standards and get the spirit of the priesthood. The youth of the Church will qualify if only we give them the proper leadership. Shall we accept this challenge? "Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence." (D. & C. 107:99).

May the power and spirit and blessing of the Lord attend us all, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

I am very sorry that we have not time enough to hear addresses of fifteen or twenty minutes each from the brethren of the First Council of the Seventy, but we shall have to ask them to limit their remarks to ten minutes.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

The most blessed thing, and the greatest thing, that has ever come to mankind in all the history of the race since the dawn of creation is the Gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ. There is nothing of so great importance to every one of us as to make a practical application of that Gospel.

It is for that purpose that we have been placed here upon this earth, that there might be made a practical application of those principles which have within them the power of God unto salvation, power to bring us back to God from whose presence we have wandered far away.

These principles are everlasting and eternal in their very scope. I am going to quote a few things in regard to these principles. People may wonder and think, "Oh, are you going to talk about faith and repentance?" Most assuredly, there isn't anything else to talk about. The Prophet Joseph Smith gave instructions to the early missionaries of this Church that they should speak none other thing to this generation than repentance of sin.

Faith is an attribute of God. Hope is a divine attribute. Charity is a divine attribute. It is a part of that image in which man has been created. Every one of those attributes form a part of the image. When we read in the scriptures, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them," it means not only in the physical image of God but in all of his divine attributes.

God is love and man is love. There is love in every human creature. There is faith in heaven and there is faith upon the earth. There is faith in man; just as there is hope and charity in every human being. No man, however savage or ignorant, has ever been discovered without these divine attributes.

We have inherited all of these divine attributes because we are the children of God in very deed, and so man is made in the image of God both in spirit and in body, in physical form and in all of his faculties; the difference being that in the one they exist in their perfection, in the other in very imperfect form. And, there is meaning in the commandment of the Saviour when he said: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

If we ever attain to those divine perfections, it will be because we have made the practical application of those principles that have within them the power of God unto our salvation. Every one of these attributes is susceptible of being developed and made perfect through the application of the principles of the Gospel, the most blessed thing, the greatest boon, the very pearl of great price that has been committed to men for the express purpose of perfecting their lives and preparing them for celestial glory. To accomplish this divine purpose God made this earth and placed us here upon it.

Let me now quote a few passages from the Apostle Paul's epistle to the Hebrews; defining faith, he says:

Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

What wonderful meaning is contained in these words! The very substance of things hoped for, the essence itself, a divine attribute and part of God.

Faith is the very substance of "the things hoped for." What are we hoping for? If we are hoping for the sordid things of the world or for the gratification of evil desires or of unworthy ambitions, then our faith is likewise bad. If our hopes are evil, then our faith is evil, for faith is the very substance of our hopes.

People who devote their whole lives in hoping for the things that are evil may know it is their faith that is guiding them. So we should be careful what we hope for. Faith is a wonderful principle.

A man once said to me—he was a clergyman, a minister—he was not orthodox—he made this statement; "You have one principle in your Church that I do not like." This man that I am speaking of was a learned man. I visited him in his home in his large living room that was literally lined with books from the floor to the ceiling, a man of scholarship, scholarly attainments. He said,

"You have one thing that I do not like."

"What is it?" I asked.

"It is that principle you call faith."

"What is the matter with faith?"

"Just think of it," said he, "to believe anything that you hear."

What a misconception he had of faith. He had no conception whatever of it. Faith doesn't mean to believe everything you hear. The Lord doesn't want us to believe everything we hear. He does not want us to believe lies or liars. He does not want us to believe falsehoods. What does he want us to believe?

“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Believe the Truth. Believe in his Gospel; his Gospel is the truth. That is what the Lord wants us to believe and he has not left us without the means of knowing, for the spirit of Christ has been given to every man that he might know good from evil, (B. of M., Moroni 7:16) and by that spirit we know when we are doing right and when we are doing wrong, and if our hopes are right and if our deeds are right then we know what we shall believe. We shall believe the truth as it is embodied in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith is a principle of power, for we read in the same Epistle, “Through faith we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God.” What was that word? In the very beginning, “Let there be light,” and the whole universe was ablaze with it, and the worlds were framed by his unbounded faith and his almighty word, the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. “All energy manifest on this planet is transmitted to us through the light of the sun,” said one of the scientists in the recent world congress in Chicago. Modern revelation informs us that all the energy of the universe emanates from the Light of Christ. (D. & C. 88:7-13).

Again, let me quote:

“For without faith it is impossible to please God.” If you want to please God you must have faith. “For he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Surely no man will bend the knee in humble prayer unless he has faith in God. If you really desire to please God then seek him diligently and your faith will never fail.

There are many people who foolishly think they know all there is about faith and repentance. As a matter of fact such people are totally ignorant of them. A prominent teacher, a scholar and withal a fine Latter-day Saint, once said to me that he would like to have something new to learn. He knew all there was about faith and repentance; he wanted to study something else. To which I replied; “If you know all about these doctrines then there is nothing else that we can teach you, for they include everything that there is to learn.”

These doctrines are all-inclusive; they enter into all the affairs of men; into every thought and into every action. They have to do with all our business transactions, all our amusements and recreations and indeed with every thought, every desire, and every ambition that enters into the human heart. This will be apparent to every thoughtful mind when we consider the fact that there is a right way and a wrong way of doing everything. Good and evil are ever present. The Spirit of Christ is given to every man that he might know good from evil (B. of M., Moroni 7:16); but the devil came also; the necessary opposition which places us in the position where we have to choose whether we want to or not. There is no escape from this responsibility for we are endowed with our own free agency, without this there could be no progress. There is no compulsion. To choose the good is faith—to reject the evil is repentance. “Whomsoever ye list to obey his servant ye are”; therefore, “Resist the

devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh unto you." Drawing nigh unto God is faith—resisting the devil is repentance. These, then, should be the governing principles of all human conduct. Then "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Now, hope follows our faith be it good or evil. What should we hope for? Surely not for the sordid things of the world but on the contrary for the triumph of God's work that his kingdom may come—his will be done on earth as it is in heaven; for a life beyond the grave and a happy reunion with loved ones that have gone before. Yes, let us hope for eternal life, God's greatest gift to man. Whence come such hopes as these? Only from faith in God. Who inspires us with these exalted hopes? Only our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who overcame death and the grave. Then true and living faith in him, which is only manifest in the works of obedience to his will, is the very substance and assurance that God gives us that our exalted hopes shall surely be realized.

Some people say they have no faith, no hope, when we die that is the end. What darkness! What despair! How I pity such people.

"Cease every joy to glimmer on my mind,

But leave, oh leave the light of hope behind," says the poet.

Now comes charity, the greatest of all the divine attributes. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity I am become as a sounding brass or tinkling symbol."

The biggest thing in all the world, then, is charity. We must not confuse that with what we call almsgiving. Almsgiving is very truly a part of charity and I might say a very important part of it, but charity goes far beyond that. It means to give all that we have and all that we are, our whole being, and even life. Christ was the embodiment of that love and that charity, for he gave his life and suffered on the cross for the whole world, and "greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend."

"Charity is the pure love of Christ," is among the sayings of one of the prophets of the Book of Mormon.

"Now abideth faith, hope and charity."

Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

The love of Christ is the perfect thing that will supersede everything else. Then cultivate these Christian attributes, these divine attributes. They are ours to develop; they are in us, a part of our nature. Develop and practice them by seeking the Lord, "if, happily, you may feel after him and find him, for he is not far distant from every one of us, for in him we live, and move and have our being."

God help us to do so I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.