

"Is this Church being divinely led?"

"Yes."

"Are those men who now stand at the head of this Church men of God?"

"Yes."

"What would you have done if you, as mission president, had received word from them, not a suggestion, but the command, to do as we did?"

They saw the light.

My brethren and sisters, it is difficult for us to understand the outstanding advantages we have over all the other nations of the world. May I, in closing, merely give utterance once more to my complete agreement with the statement of President Clark and the First Presidency, that it needs the moral force of America to bring peace into the world. Without that moral force any settlement in Europe will not be based on justice or fairness. It will not be the American way. After all, there is no thesis, there is no philosophy of life that will or can bring permanent peace into the world. We must look to the Gospel of Jesus Christ which takes care of all the needs of humanity and will eventually lead us back into the presence of God.

My prayers are for the safety of Zion, that we may prepare ourselves to do what the Lord has outlined for us to do; so that when the world comes to us to learn, we may be prepared to teach—I pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

Of the First Council of the Seventy

We are living today in one of the most crucial periods of all time. This is a day when men's hearts are failing them for fear of what awaits them as oppression and uncertainty increase, nations war against nations, and the elements themselves seem to be in commotion.

PRESENT NEED OF THE WORLD

We are living also in a time when those high principles of integrity and right, which are so fundamental to true progress, seem to be flaunted and cast aside by men and nations seeking to get gain. Even in high places, statesmen doubt the veracity of other statesmen. Distrust and intrigue abound, and the seeds of discord are sown with abandon. Thinking men wonder what we are coming to. Distressing, however, as these conditions may be, they throw into sharp perspective one great and basic truth:

That what this world needs today are men of character and integrity, men possessed of brotherly love, and faith in the all-wise Providence who is obviously working out his designs in the earth; men who are willing to do right for right's sake, with due regard for others.

God give us men. A time like this demands
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands.
 God give us men. Men whom the lust of office does not kill!
 Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
 Men who possess opinions and a will;
 Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
 Men who can stand before a demagogue
 And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking.

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,
 In public duty and in private thinking.
 For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,
 Their large professions and their little deeds,
 Mingle in selfish strife—lo! Freedom weeps;
 Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice sleeps.

(J. G. Holland.)

The world needs today men who will love and trust each other; men with vision to see the great underlying cause of the trouble which now afflicts us and with the courage to remove its cause. It needs men who understand that there can be no real stability without a knowledge and acceptance of God, men who understand that no matter how we try we can never escape the certainty in the words of Christ when he said:

Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.
 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Each generation throughout the ages has lived largely unto itself, and has failed to read in the history of the peoples of the past the story of their own success and failure. Great fundamental laws have prevailed throughout the centuries, and history now shows that when peoples of the past have complied with these laws, they have enjoyed peace and happiness, but when they have gone contrary to them, distress has been their portion.

OBSERVANCE OF GOD'S LAWS BRINGS HAPPINESS

These great fundamental principles of human conduct were given to Moses on Mount Sinai. They have been re-stated to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and are as binding today as they were when they were committed to ancient Israel.

I quote them:

I am the Lord thy God.
 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.
 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Honor thy father and thy mother.
 Thou shalt not kill.
 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 Thou shalt not steal.
 Thou shalt not bear false witness.
 Thou shalt not covet.

These principles are as fundamental to the well-being of all men and nations as any which have been declared. And may I call your particular attention to the first of those which I have read: *I am the Lord thy God. * * * Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

It is decreed that eventually every one must bow the knee and confess that Jesus is the Christ. They must acknowledge what this first statement to Moses makes clear—that there is one God, and that he lays it down as a basic principle that men must serve him, and keep his commandments if they would be saved.

Godlessness has become a major peril in all nations, and the world is paying the price of it now in the distress through which it is passing. So I say, an acknowledgment of God is the first great need of mankind today. With that acknowledgment must come also a recognition of the wisdom of his ways and the truth of his precepts, for men must not only acknowledge him, they must turn to him and serve him.

Is it any wonder then that the Lord, speaking to his modern representatives said that they must cry repentance to this generation; that we must call upon men everywhere to change their course of life, leave off their search for pleasure and the vain things of the world, and turn to that great Being who spoke to Moses on the Mount and announced the high principles contained in the Ten Commandments?

Repentance from sin is the foundation of true manhood. It ennobles the soul, and takes bitterness from the heart, placing man in greater harmony with his Creator.

In this day of unbelief, and at a time when disregard for these principles has led to war and bloodshed, we solemnly declare to all men that in very deed the Lord is God, as he said to Moses, and that he lives, also that he has appeared to men in our day and time.

PERSONAL VISITS OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

We know and teach that our Eternal Father and his Son, the Savior of the world did appear to Joseph Smith, the Prophet of modern times, and talked with him as he did anciently with Moses, face to face, as one man speaketh with another. And we further testify that the Lord committed to Joseph Smith and his associates the holy Priesthood, by which they were empowered to organize the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth in latter days, and by which they obtained the right to baptize the believers for the remission of sins, and to admit them as members into the Church of Christ.

This great congregation of Latter-day Saints knows that what I say is true, and that Joseph Smith spoke the truth when he declared that he had seen the Father and had talked with him.

Referring to his first vision, the Prophet declares :

I saw two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said : This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him.

And then Joseph says he talked with the Lord face to face, and received an answer to his questions.

But this was not the only time the Lord appeared to Joseph Smith. On April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple, once again the Prophet was privileged to gaze upon the face and figure of his glorified Lord. Of this momentous occasion the young man wrote :

We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying :

I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth. I am your advocate with the Father.

On still another occasion did the Prophet have a similar experience. As he stood with Sidney Rigdon in the little village of Hiram, Ohio, February 16, 1832, these two men were permitted a glorious view of the Redeemer, concerning which they wrote :

And now after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him : That he lives!

For we saw him, even on the right hand of God, and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.

The Latter-day Saints acknowledge the Lord as God, and they call upon men everywhere to do likewise. They know that whosoever will hearken unto his words and keep his commandments will be likened to the wise man who built his house upon the rock, and that they shall not be overcome when the strife and the storms come upon them as tribulations are poured out upon the earth by a just God who comes to judgment.

We must not overlook the fact that those who believe in Joseph Smith and have a testimony of his divine appointment are the only ones upon this earth who have a knowledge and can testify that the Lord God appeared in the latter days, for there is no other people upon the face of the earth who have such a testimony. Upon this testimony we must continue to build until the world, wherever it is possible to send word, may hear and learn that Joseph Smith received the authority to establish the Church in the earth through a personal visit of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, and with such a knowledge we may trust that our salvation is assured if we keep the commandments of God.