

Missionaries to Europe obtain an international interest and point of view, particularly in the cultural affairs of life. They acquire a broad range of facts on which to formulate and base sound judgments. Mormon missionaries generally, in my opinion, influence the spiritual life of the world, because their efforts are instrumental in opening up to the communities in which they proselyte, new and fresh opportunities for serving God, for crystallizing hopes into action, for working out salvation.

Sister Evans and I have strong testimonies of the truth of the Gospel, testimonies which come from God. We shall never forget the golden memories of the French Mission, which become, as time passes, more and more pleasant, uplifting and inspirational. With all our hearts we want to respond to every call that may be made of us and if and when conditions warrant to return to complete our missions.

May the Lord bless and prosper this work throughout the world is my prayer, and I ask it humbly in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, Amen.

An anthem, "O Savior of the World," (Goss), was sung by the Ricks College Choir.

### ELDER ALBERT E. BOWEN

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I want to talk to you today about the abundant life. The expression belongs to the sayings of Jesus. I quote him.

#### THE SAVIOR'S WORDS

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:9-10.)

#### THE MEANING CHANGED

That fine phrase, coined and employed by the Master, has in recent times been so violently wrenched from the noble setting in which He put it and has been made to assume a significance so widely variant from the one He gave it that, having regard to its original sense, one now shrinks from using it at all.

Without, I believe, the customary acknowledgement of its origin, it has been dragged down from its high spiritual plane to the ordinary level of every day materialism. More often than not now-a-days "the abundant life" is made the synonym for a full stomach, or a modernized home, or coveted apparel, or a new model automobile. And these mere things are held up to view as if they constituted the goal of ultimate desire, which, is symptomatic of present day measures of value.

## A HIGHER INTERPRETATION

But it is abundantly clear that that is not at all what was in the mind of Jesus when He used the expression. It follows immediately upon His declaration that it was by Him that man shall be saved. Salvation meant to Him something far different than the mere physical comfort or even preservation of the mortal body, or the gratification of the physical senses, or the invention of new excitements to relieve us of our artificially created boredom.

He was always concerned with eternal spiritual values, never with mere things, as His utterances so fully show. When He talked about life He always embraced within His meaning something far transcending the satisfying powers of mere things.

## PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN

Let us take an example :

And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness : for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully :

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ?

And he said, This will I do : I will put down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee ; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided ?

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

And He said unto His disciples, Therefore, I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat ; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. (Luke 12:15-23.)

There you have it crystal clear. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." And "The life is more than meat and the body is more than raiment."

## CARE OF THE BODY ESSENTIAL

Now I would not have you suppose that I am trying to say to you that your physical needs may be ignored or even neglected. The body is the physical instrumentality through which we work in this physical world. It requires physical food and material shelter to perpetuate it in being. Its perpetuation is essential to the accomplishment of the purposes of this earth life.

Within limits the meeting of the requirements of the physical body is essential to the successful spiritual and mental progress of mortal man. This we have always recognized. But when we with the single purpose of

amassing to ourselves a multiplication of things with which to augment our individual power, selfishly try to gather to ourselves alone, to the exclusion of our fellow men, then we are losing our sense of proportion and are exalting the incidentals of life over the essence of life itself.

Perhaps between the material and the spiritual, properly coordinated, there is no sharp line of separation, but the material must always be servant of the spiritual, its proper sovereign.

#### PRESIDENT YOUNG'S PRACTICAL TEACHING

President Brigham Young gave us some sound teaching in this respect. Said he:

Our preaching to you from Sabbath to Sabbath, sending the Gospel to the nations, gathering the people, opening farms, making needed improvements, and building cities, all pertain to salvation. The Gospel is designed to gather a people that will be of one heart and of one mind. Let every individual in this city feel the same interest for the public good as he does for his own, and you will at once see this community still more prosperous, and still more rapidly increasing in wealth, influence, and power. But where each one seeks to benefit himself or herself alone, and does not cherish a feeling for the prosperity and benefit of the whole, that people will be disorderly, unhappy, and poverty-stricken, and distress, animosity and strife will reign.

Efforts to accumulate property in the correct channel are far from being an injury to any community, on the contrary they are highly beneficial, provided individuals, with all that they have, always hold themselves in readiness to advance the interests of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Let every man and woman be industrious, prudent, and economical in their acts and feelings, and while gathering to themselves, let each one strive to identify his or her interests with the interests of this community with those of their neighbor and neighborhood, let them seek their happiness and welfare in that of all, and we will be blessed and prospered. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 330.)

#### ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF LIFE

Mortality is not the ultimate destiny of man. The things essential to mortal life are in life and of life, but they are not life itself; they are mere incidentals. Life itself has some other purpose than feeding and clothing and sheltering the body. It is the realization of that purpose that Jesus was concerned about. Therein is to be found the abundant life.

To the inquiring rich young man He said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (*Matt. 19:17*)

This seems to say that moving, animated, sentient human beings, howsoever well fed or clothed or sheltered, or entertained or amused have not even seen life, or tasted of it, or entered into it, unless they have brought themselves into a rational understanding of its ultimate purpose. Enlarging upon His terse answer to the young man Jesus said:

Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Honor thy father and thy mother: and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

You will notice that here again the woof of the life that He has in mind consists in those soul qualities which when woven into the warp of a man lift him high above the level of gross materialism into the rarefied atmosphere of the spirit.

Jesus was concerned about preparing men to live the spiritual law and to fit them for life in His kingdom where that law shall reign. There is the abode of those who attain the fulness of the abundant life. To that end the burden of His teaching was that men should keep the commandments. He spent much of His time training disciples to carry on the teaching after He himself should be gone. He told them to go out and teach all men everywhere. That was the commission. The promise was that they who believed should be saved. There is no promise to any other.

#### ACCEPTANCE OF GOSPEL TEACHINGS NECESSARY

It is true that certain things were to be done by those who believed. But He knew that belief must precede the doing of them. He knew, too, that they would surely follow from sincere belief, hence the preeminent importance of belief. It is the crying need of the world today. If men would but believe and translate their belief into living practices, how different a place to live in this earth would be.

The commandments emanated from Jesus himself. Before it could be expected that men would accept them, they must accept Him. Thus He became the central figure about which all the teachings revolved.

To the multitude who crowded about Him the day after He had fed them He said:

Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.

Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you.

They reminded Him that their fathers in the desert were fed by manna from heaven and demanded of Him that He shew them His works that they might believe. He in turn reminded them that their fathers who had eaten manna in the wilderness, were all dead. Then He said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I am that bread of life.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

\* \* \* \* \*

From that time—says the record pathetically—many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.

If you will search the record you will find that at no time did He make any promise of ease, or comfort, or freedom from distress or from sorrow or suffering, or of exemption from privation or want or sacrifice. None of these was an element in the abundant life. All of them He endured Himself.

## THE TEMPTER OVERCOME

Preparatory to entering upon His ministry He went into the desert alone. When He was weakened from long vigils and fasting the tempter bade Him, in proof of His Sonship, to command that the stones be turned into bread, that His hunger might be appeased. Resisting this He was shown from the top of a high mountain all the kingdoms of the world which, with all the glory of them, were offered Him if He would but bow in worship to the Tempter. Rising to heights befitting the majesty of the Son of God He issued the stern command, "Get thee hence Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." At the same time He promulgated that other profound truth. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He could have fed His hunger, and accepted the dominion of the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, and escaped Golgotha. His refusal led straight to that dolorous hill and the apparent end of it all. But Golgotha, not bread or dominion or glory, was the way of the abundant life. It brought Him swiftly to the dawn of that triumphant morning at the end of the Sabbath on the first day of the week when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the sepulchre and were greeted by the angel who, seated on the stone at the door said:

Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified.  
He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come see the place  
where the Lord lay.  
And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead;  
and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see Him.

Thus came the great crowning achievement of His life.

You will have observed that I am making no argument for the authenticity of the words of Jesus nor of the records which preserve them. I accept them, which is what all believing Christians must do. Very persuasive arguments could be and have been made, but neither the limits of time nor the nature of the occasion admit of them here. We accept Jesus as the Son of God, the Author of our being and our ultimate Savior.

## ETERNAL LIFE THE GREATEST PRIZE

To that faith we cling because it concerns life itself which is man's most cherished possession—the thing which he prizes above all else. Howsoever many things a man may have gathered about him, he normally would give all of them when life is threatened if by the exchange he could procure an extension of it. Life he soon comes to sense is all there is of him. Without that he is but a lump of clay, and all these other things without meaning and useless. In very truth the projection of it beyond the grave, the assuring it there of endless duration—eternal life—is the greatest gift of God to man.

The alternative is oblivion. The sinking with death into nothingness—the end. Extinction. The irremediable severance of all the fond

associations of a life time. The abrupt cutting off and non-revivable termination, so far as concerns the individual, of all the fine intelligence and acquisitions of knowledge born of a lifetime of industry, toil and struggle and yearning and soul-striving. The smothering in the black darkness of unending night of all the hopes and aspirations which have guided man in his struggle upward to higher planes. The withering up by the blight of death of the qualities of kindness, gentleness, forbearance, mercy, tenderness and love which have grown and flowered in him through his practice of those virtues in association with his fellows.

No one, I suspect, likes to contemplate for himself so uninviting and uninspiring and wasteful an exit from life. Rather do we turn to the bright hope held out to us in the promise of Jesus:

There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the Kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

In the way to that goal lies the abundant life. I pray God we may all attain it, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

### PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

#### *First Counselor in the First Presidency*

Last night I reported to President Grant by telephone the first day of the Conference. He was delighted, of course, to know that we had had such a wonderful time together, and was keenly desirous that we should continue to enjoy the blessings of the Lord.

#### EXPLANATION OF MANNER OF VOTING

We shall now present for your sustaining vote the General Authorities, and certain Church-wide groups of officers, of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

For the benefit of the strangers who may be meeting here with us or listening on the air, a few words of explanation may be given.

To speak in terms of political science, this assembly here today, this Annual Conference, of the Priesthood and membership of the Church will, for the purpose of sustaining the Authorities of the Church, act as a constituent assembly. Every General Authority of the Church, as well as other Church officers, comes before such an assembly twice each year.

Again speaking in terms of political science, in the Church the nominating power rests in a group, the General Authorities, but the sustaining or electing power rests in the body of the Church, which under no circumstances nominates officers, the function of the Church body being solely to sustain or to elect. In fact, as will be seen, the General Authority or other officer is proposed to the body of the Church for their sustaining vote.

The sole function of this constituent assembly today, is, as