

til he has received the Melchizedek Priesthood and that makes the receiving of the Melchizedek Priesthood a condition of salvation, to every male member of the Church. We have had the privilege, many of us, of going to the temple, having first received the Melchizedek Priesthood, and receive certain sealing ordinances there, entering into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, and it is in that covenant that the greatest blessings that our Father has to give to us are given. Those who have attained those higher blessings, that is husband and wife sealed for time and

eternity, they are to have an offspring, an eternal increase. It is unthinkable that that condition could be obtained outside of the marriage relations that the Lord hath ordained. Priesthood is necessary in order to receive those blessings. We ought then, brethren, to appreciate this Priesthood which God has permitted us to hold and keep all the covenants we have entered into with the Lord, and be prepared for that which we hope to receive when we have finished this brief period upon this earth. May God help us to this end, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ALBERT E. BOWEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

ALMOST every day we hear it said, or read it, that we are living in a changing world. I don't believe many of the people who use that phrase have any very clear idea about what they mean by it. It sounds good, seeming to imply a penetrating insight into the portent of the times, no matter how nebulous or muddy the thinking behind it may be, so it is freely used.

But I don't want to talk about that. A companion phrase is that we can't go back—we'll never go back to things as they were before. Well, the man who finds himself finally hanged on the gallows is the man who, when he got started off wrong, wouldn't go back. My judgment is that when we get started on the wrong way the sooner we turn back the better. The whole doctrine of repentance assumes a turning back from wrong to right.

But I don't want to go into that, either. I merely want to remind you that, amid all the changes in an ever-changing world there are some immutable things which do not change. They are as steadfast and unchanging as the heavens, which are the same now as when the first man looked out upon them. They are the basis of the moral order of the world which is the foundation upon which our civilization itself is built. The task of today is to preserve, though all else change, man's al-

legiance, unshaken, to those eternal foundations.

The Ten Commandments, for instance. They cannot be abrogated without abrogating the moral order of the world, shaking down the very foundations upon which our civilization rests. They set forth the law of life and can never be outmoded or rendered obsolete while life endures. They are of just as much binding force today as they were on the day when they were spoken with the voice of thunder out of the clouds on Sinai. They can no more be violated without disastrous consequences than one can violate any law governing in the physical world without being visited with the inescapable penalty.

As I listened to the powerful message of the Presidency, delivered this morning, I was impressed with the importance of that idea. From that message, if we were attentive to it, we learned that as to basic things there is no middle ground. Either we live by them or we pay the penalty of departure from their inexorable commands. They are not subject to modification or interpretation, but stand wholly as given, to be accepted in whole and lived completely.

It is the same with the basic things upon which we have rested our faith.

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Either a thing is, or it is not. To illustrate: This Church is founded upon the proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that through His mediation it became possible for us to attain immortality and eternal life. We cannot deviate from that. He is the Son of the Living God, the author of our salvation, and must be accepted in that light solely and completely. The whole structure of our own Church revolves about that basic fact. We say that the God of heaven came down in answer to the prayer of a boy and that He brought with Him a personage whom He introduced as His son, and He commanded that praying boy to hear His Son. And out of the teachings which were then given, and followed up by subsequent instructions, this Church was established. Now, that admits of no explanation, of no modification. Either those things happened or they

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did not happen. There is no middle ground; and if they did not happen then we have nothing, because our whole structure is founded upon that assumed fact. We accept it as a fact, and we may not temporize with it, try to explain it away, modify it, or liberalize about it. It stands as the basic thing upon which our whole faith is founded. And our whole system of belief exacts of us that we accept those basic truths, without modification or change. As with the moral order of the world so those things may not be changed. They are as binding today as when they were first declared by the voice of God out of the heavens, and they will never change.

May God grant that we may hold steadfastly to them and that we may order our lives so that we shall not find occasions to depart from them, I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (I Peter 2:9)

NO one can look into the faces of this extraordinary body of men and partake of the spirit present without being conscious that there is here a power not usually felt in gatherings of like numbers.

The source of this power is, of course, the Priesthood. Each of us bearing the Priesthood, as we do, there should be power in our gatherings, for as Peter wrote to the Saints in his day, so with equal truth it may be said of us, we "are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood," and it is our calling and opportunity to "shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness unto his marvelous light."

All who have received the gospel have come from darkness into light, but we, who have been invited to this conference, have been called, also, to leadership in the Priesthood; to be officers in the government of God; to re-

sponsibility in a well-defined field of action in which no one else can function so long as we hold the appointment.

Yesterday, the responsibility of leadership was borne by our fathers; tomorrow, it will rest upon our children; today, it is ours. It is now that we should feel the weight of our callings.

As we labor in the Church, two observations force themselves upon us. One is that there is great strength and devotion among the membership of the Church. No one can visit among the branches, wards, and stakes and see the amount of work that is done and the time freely given to service in the activities of the Priesthood quorums and auxiliaries without being impressed with this strength and devotion. It makes one, with the spirit of this latter-day work, thrill to be a part of it.

The other observation is of quite a different nature. It comes when the individual records of members are examined. They show that in nearly every Priesthood quorum in the Church there is a large percentage of our brethren who count the high honor