

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

My brethren: I shall not detain you. I arise from a sense of duty and because President McKay has asked me to do so.

Some four years ago I was down in Oklahoma City attending a Scout meeting. I gave some pretty strong doctrine for that group regarding the teaching of youth, and I summed up the principle behind some of my observations in a sentence reading somewhat like this: "Youth will not hearken to a sinning man crying repentance." I still stand by that observation.

UNITY A PRINCIPLE OF POWER

I would like to say just a word or two on a subject that I touched on last conference and that I may talk about again at some other conference if I shall be spared to be with you. I refer to the question of unity, and I will make my observations brief and as pointed as I may.

Brethren: If this Church is to grow as the Lord wants it to grow, if the people are to become as righteous in their living as the Lord wants them to become, there must be unity in this Church. It will not do for presidents of stakes or for bishops or for heads of auxiliary organizations to chart their own course. If we are to move forward we must move together. I loathe war so much that I hate to use any illustration in connection with it, but I do call your attention to this fact, of which we are all sensible in these times, that there could be no successful campaign by a series of armies if they did not act in unity. If every general "went off on his own," there never would be a successful operation.

Now, so much for unity in administration. I would like to say just a word about unity in faith. The whole history of the world shows that nations have gone into decay and have fallen because of internal trouble, internal dissension, internal rottenness. The church, speaking in general terms—not of our Church—has had the same experience. Foes from without were not the church's undoing, it was those who were within.

WORDS OF WARNING

I want to say to you brethren, and I am not professing any spirit of seership or prophecy, I am only going on the lessons which history has taught me, but I tell you we are beginning to follow along the course of the early Christian church. So long as that church was persecuted from without, it prospered, but when it began to be polluted from within, the church began to wither.

There is creeping into our midst, and I warn you brethren about it, and I urge you to meet it, a great host of sectarian doctrines that have no place amongst us. The gospel in its simplicity,

is to be found in the revelations, the teachings of the Prophet and the early leaders of the Church. We shall make no mistake if we follow them. We shall make mistakes, and we shall lead our youth, or some of them, to apostasy if we try to harmonize our simple beliefs with the philosophy and the speculations of sectarian doctrines. When you can hear in our Sunday Schools in some of our most prominent wards, that we do not need to worry much about or think much about the first vision, we do not need to think very much about the atoning sacrifice of Christ—that is a mystery; we do not need to think very much about the power of healing or functions of the priesthood, but only about our cultural and material achievements, we would better be careful.

We must not "liberalize," and I put that term in quotes, our teachings; we must accept them as God gave them to us and there must be amongst us a unity in faith. We used to hear that expression often when I was a boy, I have not heard it for a long time, but it is a good term to get back into our vocabularies.

May the Lord give us unity, may he inspire us with his Spirit, may he give all of us humility, make us humble, teach us how little we know, and may he give us a realizing sense of our obligation towards the youth, to see to it that no word or thought or act of ours shall tamper with their faith.

YOUTH HUNGERING FOR THE GOSPEL

I testify from my observation, to the truthfulness of the words of Brother Clayton last night to the bishops when he told them that the youth were hungering for the gospel. You read the letters from the boys at the front when they tell you about what they talk when they come together in meetings. It is about the restored gospel, it is about faith and the power of faith and righteous living. When they get to the front, with all that that means, all finespun ethics and philosophy leave them; they come back to the stern realities of religion—the existence of God, the atoning blood of the Savior, the power of faith, the reality of the first vision, the reality of the priesthood, the reality of power of the priesthood, the reality of salvation.

God give us all, I repeat, humility and a full sense of our obligation to the youth and of our responsibility if we mislead them, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

It is a joy to be with you, my brethren. Each of these speakers representing the Presiding Bishopric, the First Council of Seventy, the Twelve, and the Patriarch, have given special messages. Let us give heed to them.