

## ELDER MILTON R. HUNTER

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

My dear brethren and sisters, I would like to acknowledge my deep appreciation to my Father in heaven this afternoon for the privilege I have of belonging to the true Church of Jesus Christ along with you good people. I also wish to express to each of you my gratitude for your kindness to us when we come out to your stake conferences. I do humbly ask our Father in heaven to guide what I say this afternoon.

## TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

When the Son of Man was upon the earth some two thousand years ago teaching the gospel, a certain lawyer came to him and asked a question. He asked: "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" The Savior answered and said:

... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:36-40.)

The Son of Man on that occasion declared that the very foundation of all religious life, the very foundation and the heart of the worship of God was love—a love for God and a love for our fellow men. In fact, his whole message throughout his three years of ministry upon this earth was centered in the great law of love.

## THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

The last part of Jesus' statement to the lawyer, "upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," can be explained as follows. In the days of the Savior, the Hebrew scripture was divided into three main divisions. The first division was called the "Torah" or "Law." It was composed of the five books of Moses. The second division was called the "Prophets." It consisted of the teachings of the major and minor prophets and some of the historical books. The third division was called the "Writing." It was composed of the remainder of the Old Testament books as we have them today.

The Law and the Prophets were very highly canonized, or, in other words, accepted as scripture or as the Word of God in the days of the Savior. The Writings were in the process of being canonized at that time. Therefore, when Jesus Christ said, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," he was saying, "On these two commandments hang all the teachings of the Holy Scriptures." In fact, in answer to the lawyer's

question, "Which is the greatest commandment in the law?" Jesus quoted, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . ." from Deuteronomy 6:5, and, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," from Leviticus 19:18.

#### COMMANDMENT OF LOVE

In the very beginning, the Only Begotten Son of God gave the commandment of love to Father Adam and has repeatedly revealed throughout the generations that we should love God and that we should love our fellow men. In fact, this dispensation we are living in is the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, wherein all things are to be restored; therefore, the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith

Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (D. & C. 59:5-6.)

I think that the modern revelation is even more beautifully stated than the one recorded in the New Testament.

#### CRITERIA OF LOVE

How do we know when we love God with all of our hearts? What criteria do we have by which we can judge? The Savior himself gave us the criteria. He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) Therefore, only to the extent that we keep the commandments that God has given us do we love the Eternal Father and his Only Begotten Son.

The night before the Savior's crucifixion, he gave his great last known discourse and instructions to his Apostles. Some of the most beautiful sentiments found in the New Testament were recorded by John in his report of what occurred on that occasion. I would like to quote just a few lines from that wonderful discourse.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

These things I command you, that ye love one another. (John 15: 9-14, 17.)

The Lord has also re-revealed in modern days the criteria by which we can tell whether we love God or not. He said to the Prophet Joseph Smith—and of course that commandment is to us through the Prophet—

If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments.  
(D. & C. 42:29.)

Notice the phrase, "keep all my commandments." Our promise of exaltation in the presence of God is based on that phrase.

#### COMMANDMENTS

Now the commandments are very numerous, and we haven't time to discuss them in detail on this occasion. You know them as well as I do. But I would just like to call to mind a few of God's commandments to us. We have the great law of tithing, wherein the Lord has declared that if we do not pay one-tenth of all that we possess to him, we rob God. Among the other great commandments are the law of chastity and the Word of Wisdom. These laws pertain to keeping our bodies clean and pure. There are also the laws and commandments pertaining to honesty, love, charity, patience, kindness, reverence, and numerous others. In fact, the Lord has said that if we receive exaltation in his kingdom, we will do so only on condition that we render obedience to "every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God." (*Ibid.*, 84:44.)

I should like to emphasize the fact that today is the day for Latter-day Saints to prepare to meet God by keeping all of his commandments, lest the night cometh wherein we cannot repent. If we do not render obedience now, we might find ourselves at the judgment day in the condition that the lady found herself in a dream, as reported by one of the stake presidents at a conference I attended in Salt Lake City about a year ago. I do not recall the stake, and so I don't know which stake president to give credit to for this story.

#### STORY OF THE TEAPOT

He reported that there was a certain lady living in his ward who had joined the Church over in Europe when she was a girl; and like many of the European people she had formed the habit of drinking tea. After she joined the Church of Jesus Christ, like quite a few Mormons (I am sorry to say) she continued the habit of drinking tea. She reared a large family. Her children married. Her husband died, and she became a widow. And then she became a temple worker. Day after day she went to the temple, and no doubt the consciousness of the tea-drinking habit she had bore rather heavily on her mind or on her conscience. One night she had a dream. She dreamed that she died and that she passed on into the other world. There she came into the presence of the Savior, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and many other great and good people who had lived on this earth and whose lives had been such that they were now worthy to become celestial beings. Very sweet, serene, and happy were the feelings that she experienced there. In fact, there were no words to describe how beautiful the conditions were there, until she looked down into her hand and saw her old

dirty, black teapot. Then her happiness turned to sorrow and shame. She immediately looked all around in the heavenly realm for some place to hide that teapot, but she couldn't find any place. She had to hang on to it. Then she awoke. Cold drops of perspiration were running down her face. She got out of bed, turned the light on, dressed, and went in the other room. There on her stove sat her old dirty teapot. She picked it up, went down to the back of the lot and threw it into the Jordan River, and she said, "There! I am not going to take you to heaven with me."

My brothers and sisters, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now is the time for you and me to get rid of all of our old dirty, black teapots. In other words, we should get rid of all our sins. We should repent, as Brother Romney just pointed out in his address, and show God that we love him with all our hearts, with all our mind, and with all our strength.

#### LOVE OF NEIGHBOR

We shall now devote our attention to the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." I do not know whether each of us has thought of this idea very much or not. A man cannot love God with all of his heart unless he loves all of his fellow men with all of his heart. If a man says that he loves God and does not love his fellow men, according to the teachings of the prophets, that man is a liar. He is not telling the truth. For example, John made this very unusual and wonderful statement:

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

And this commandment have we from him. That he who loveth God love his brother also. (I John 4:7-8, 20-21.)

#### ANALYZE THE HEART

Now, I would like to ask everyone of us this afternoon to analyze his or her heart for a moment or two and see if we really love our fellow men. If we do love them, let us see how deep our love is for them. The commandment is to love our neighbors as much as we love ourselves. I know that is most difficult to do. The first law of nature is the law of self preservation, and people pretty generally follow that first law. In fact, I think the most important person to almost everybody in this world is himself or herself.

A good Latter-day Saint husband may think he loves his wife with all his heart. He may think he loves her more than he loves himself, but if he happens to express an idea that she doesn't agree with and she voices her disagreement, then his hair immediately stands on end. He builds up all sorts of arguments against her in

defending his own position. In fact, he feels a resentment in his heart.

Too many people—and I mean, definitely, too many Latter-day Saints—gloat over the sins of their unfortunate neighbors. In fact, it seems to build them up a little bit to learn that somebody else has made worse mistakes than they. If the telephone rings and the party on the other end of the line tells the story that he has heard about a sin committed the previous night by one of his neighbors, the one who received the telephone call immediately goes over to his next-door neighbor and says, "Did you hear what happened last night?" Then he repeats the account of the unfortunate happening and greatly exaggerates the story. Is that true love? Is that charity? It is not!

True and pure love and charity are found where a mother and father are concerned. In the cases where parents of sinful children are concerned, the parents don't go to the telephone and tell their neighbors, but they go to their private chambers. There they wet their pillows with their tears, and they pray to God that he will save their son or their daughter from sin and from the ways of error into which he or she has fallen.

#### LETTER OF THE LAW

Ofttimes you and I have met members of our Church who seem to live all the letter of the law. They pay their tithes and offerings, they keep the Word of Wisdom, and they attend Church regularly. In fact, one would think that they were excellent Latter-day Saints. Yet, too many of these people have professional jealousy cankering their hearts. They have envy, strife, malice, and even hatred in their hearts. They fail to treat the ones with whom they associate with love and with charity. They don't express the Golden Rule in the way they treat the ones with whom they work and associate. Yet they claim to love God. John declared that such individuals are liars and that they cannot love God and at the same time hate their fellow men. Now to what extent are we guilty?

#### LOVE OF ENEMIES

The Savior not only taught that we should love our friends, but he also taught that we should love our enemies. To quote:

And behold it is written also, that thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy;

But behold I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you. (III Nephi 12:43-44.)

Is that teaching going too far? Can we really love our enemies? I would answer that if we get that godliness in our hearts, the pure love of Jesus Christ that we should have, we can love our enemies.

Many of the great prophets have demonstrated that they could

love their enemies. Jesus Christ demonstrated far beyond the shadow of a doubt that he could love his enemies. For example, a few days prior to his crucifixion, you recall that the Son of God and his Apostles were in Jerusalem. He knew that the Jews were going to betray him and that he was going to be crucified. On that occasion he felt greatly concerned about what was going to happen to the Jews because they had rejected him and the gospel which he had proclaimed. He prophesied regarding the calamities which would come upon his people, and then he lamented as follows:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. (Matthew 23:37-38.)

### EXAMPLE OF JESUS

And then Jesus told his Apostles about the great calamities that would come upon his people and upon the remainder of the inhabitants of the earth before his second coming. The scriptures report that the Son of God was touched so deeply on certain occasions because of the sins of the people and the calamities that would befall them that "Jesus wept."

How many of us are so concerned about the sins of the people of our home towns that after we have done all we can to teach them the way of eternal life, we then sit upon a hill overlooking our home town and weep? I am afraid that very few of us do that. We do not have that much charity; we do not have that much feeling; we do not have that much love in our hearts for those who fall into transgression.

I firmly believe that when Jesus Christ was hanging on the cross he showed the greatest expression of love that has ever been shown in history. He was suffering the terrific pain which accompanies crucifixion. The jeering multitude was down below the cross, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." (Ibid., 27:40.) The ordinary man would have cursed the taunters and revilers, but the Only Begotten Son of God while suffering such excruciating pain and revilings merely cast his eyes toward heaven and prayed,

... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34.)

This great example of love reminds me of the martyrdom of Stephen. While the Jews were stoning him to death, the scripture reports:

And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. (Acts 7:60.)

## NEEDED QUALITIES

All Latter-day Saints who work in the Church and hold any Church position must love God; and if we are going to be acceptable to him, we must love our fellow men. In fact, we have received a divine commission in our day. It applies to the General Authorities of the Church, to all the stake presidents, bishops of wards, and to all stake, ward, and branch officers and teachers. This is the word of the Lord:

And no one can assist in this work except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, charity, being temperate in all things, whatsoever shall be entrusted to his care. (D. & C. 12:8.)

The greatest poem that I know of devoted to the subject of love or charity was written by Apostle Paul. It is found in First Corinthians, chapter thirteen. Time will not permit a discussion of that great poem here. Suffice it to say that Paul mentioned a lot of godly attributes that we might possess. And then he summarized by saying that if we possess all of those godly attributes and have not charity, we are nothing. He put charity and love as the greatest of all attributes.

## TEACHINGS OF MORMON

I would like to quote from Mormon the great teachings he gave on love and charity. He wrote.

And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly in heart.

If so, his faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly of heart; and if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; and if he hath not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.

And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all the true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. (Moroni 7:43-48.)

In conclusion, my beloved brothers and sisters, I humbly ask our Father in heaven that he will let a rich abundance of his Holy Spirit enter our hearts; that the pure love of Jesus Christ might dwell in our hearts; that we might do away with all envy and strife; that we might be filled with love; that we might really love the Lord our

God with all our hearts, might, mind, and strength; that we might really and truly serve God in the name of Jesus Christ and love our neighbors as ourselves. This I ask in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

#### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

If I might enjoy the Spirit of the Lord to direct me for a few moments this afternoon, I would like to talk about a subject which has been discussed in all the general conferences of this Church by members of the First Presidency—in every conference, so far as I can recall.

#### BLESSINGS OF UNITY

I refer to the importance of unity and oneness of the Latter-day Saints.

As I have pondered the importance of this matter, I have recalled some of the blessings we could enjoy if we would be united as a people. If we would be united in paying our fast offerings and observing the law of the fast as fully as the Lord has taught it, and if we were united in carrying out the principles of the welfare program as they have been given to us by our leaders today, we would be free from want and distress and would be able fully to care for our own. Our failure to be united would be to allow our needy to become the pawns of politicians in the public mart.

If we were fully united as a people in our missionary work, we would rapidly hasten the day when the gospel would be preached to all people without and within the boundaries of the organized stakes of Zion. If we are not united, we will lose that which has been the lifeblood and which has fed and stimulated this Church for a generation.

If we were fully united in keeping the law of sacrifice and paying our tithes as we have been schooled today, we would have sufficient to build our temples, our chapels, our schools of learning. If we fail to do that, we will be in the bondage of mortgage and debt.

If we were united as a people in electing honorable men to high places in our civil government, regardless of the political party with which we have affiliation, we would be able to safeguard our communities and to preserve law and order among us. Our failure to be united means that we permit tyranny and oppression and taxation to the extent of virtual confiscation of our own property.

If we are united in supporting our own official newspapers and magazines which are owned and operated by the Church and for Church members, there will always be in this Church a sure voice to the people, but if we fail to be united in giving this support, we permit ourselves to be subject to abuse, slander, and to misrepresentation without any adequate voice of defense.