

Saturday, April 7

Priesthood Meeting

you are not so strict with them that they can't come to you with anything.

Well, brothers, I didn't intend to say those things to you. May the Lord bless you that you may try and stay close to your sons, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Delta Phi Returned Missionary Chorus of the Brigham Young University joined the congregation in singing the hymn, "Now Let Us Rejoice," Richard P. Condie, Assistant Director of the Tabernacle Choir conducting.

ELDER J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren: It is again a great opportunity to face you and to try to speak to you for a few moments. You who bear the priesthood of God, there is in you, and the rest of us who bear this priesthood, the greatest power and force that there is in the world. That power and that force when understood and exercised, involves the control of all the elements that go to make up the universe; compared to that power and that control the H-bomb is a mere tiny firecracker.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

There are certain great principles that underlie our existence here on this planet and that are to be guiding principles for us. First there is the great principle of free agency given to us before the world was. Because of the exercise of that free agency, Satan rebelled and has since fought from the day of the great council in heaven until now, the plan of life and salvation that was submitted by the Son and adopted by the Father. The principle of free agency is fundamental to all of our freedom and all of our living.

One of the first commandments given to Adam relating to mortal life, perhaps the first that we have record of, was to multiply and replenish the earth. And behind that great principle and that commandment lies the eternity of the marriage covenant, the creation of bodies to tabernacle spirits that our Heavenly Father created, and to bring them to this earth so that they might have mortal bodies, live according to the commandments of God, that they might in their next estate begin and go on through all the eternities in eternal progression.

Another great principle to which I would like to call your attention is the command given to Adam when he left the Garden of Eden: "By the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." This is the great law of work, and the Lord has given us no greater blessing, given us no commandment that will be more helpful in carrying out

his plan than this law of work. In addition to that, he gave us the gospel which has been with us since the days of Adam, in one form or another.

CONDITIONS IN THE WORLD

Now, my brethren, I wish merely to invite your attention to what is going on in the world today. The principle of free agency has been virtually blotted out among 140 or 150 millions of people, and that virus, the destruction of free agency, has been scattered over the world as if by the wind until today it affects us here in increasingly growing proportions. Our agency is being destroyed, and when it is gone then will your freedom to worship, your freedom to believe what you wish to believe, your freedom to build your own lives, your freedom to teach your children, this and all other freedoms, will go with it.

The commandment to multiply and replenish the earth is being defeated by those ideologies which are destroying the liberties of the peoples of the world because they are breaking down the marriage relationship. They are encouraging illicit relations; they are taking over the children and instructing them to that import. They are teaching children only what they want them to know for their own purposes.

Labor, we already know enough about that, even in this country—less work more pay, less work more pay, less work more pay. Men should have, the Lord intends they should have, a proper return for their labor, but the Lord does not countenance in any way my stealing from my neighbor, whether I go out and steal a horse from his barn or whether I, instead of working, loaf down in the field where my employer can not see me.

And the gospel, the standards of the gospel,—well, take up any national magazine, look at the ads and, if you can stand the filth, read some of the stories—they are, in their expressed and suggestive standards of life, destructive of the very foundations of our society. Hardly an advertisement, that is an exaggeration, but many advertisements carry illustrations that are intended to suggest and do suggest illicit sexual relations.

WORK OF THE DEVIL

All of this, brethren, if you consider it, and I am only suggesting, falls into one pattern. It is the pattern of one great mind, a near divine intellect. It is the work of the devil. He is back where he was at the time of the great council in Heaven when he would have taken away the free agency of men, save them in their sins, indeed there would have been no sin; thus under his plan there would have been no development, under his plan eternal progression would have been ruled out. We would have become mere automatons, living and breathing, and eating if we could get something to eat, and breeding like animals. What are we going to do about it, brethren? I say to you again, that the power of the priesthood

which we hold can conquer all of this, but we can not do it as individuals working alone.

POWER TO SAVE THE WORLD

And so I come back to my theme song in all of these meetings: We must have unity. We must work together. We must submerge our individual likes and dislikes. We must follow the plan that has been made and given to us. And if we do, then the body of the priesthood of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can work, not only miracles, but can revolutionize the world. Unity cannot be manifest nor exercised by fault finding, back biting, complaining about those in authority over us, substituting our ways for the ways which are given to us by those who are our leaders, finding this excuse and that excuse for not doing what we are asked to do. Now, brethren, I appeal to you as earnestly as I know how, and again I urge the same appeal I have made here, conference after conference, for eighteen years. Be united, united in our wards, united in our quorums, united in our stakes. Support the men wholeheartedly, fully, unequivocally, unhesitatingly for whom we hold up our hands and vote at our various conferences. And if we do not do this, then what right have we to ask the Lord to bless us.

Now I know, brethren, I am talking to people who do most if not all of these things, and when I speak as I do, I do not intend to speak complainingly. I am only trying to point out the condition of this world as it seems to me, and I am trying to tell you what I know as well as I know that I live, that the power which we have if we would merely magnify our priesthood, will save the world. May God give us the strength so to do I humbly pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Though Brother Clark felt a little irked when his assigned duty to direct was slightly modified, he has set a good example to us all. He did as he was told.

There are in attendance tonight, as reported, a total of 15,050 members of the Priesthood—10,250 in seats, aisles, and doorways of the Tabernacle; 300 in the Baptistery; 2,200 in the Assembly Hall; 1,000 in the Barratt Hall, and an estimated 1,300 on the grounds.

Six months ago, we were blessed with the presence of our beloved President, George Albert Smith. Tonight we are deprived of his earthly companionship. How uncertain life is. The silent, inaudible foot of time is marching on bringing each of us nearer and nearer to the end of our earthly careers. Before his passing there were a few items scheduled for presentation at this priesthood meeting, and I shall just mention them briefly before making a few concluding remarks.

MISSIONARY RECOMMENDATIONS

One relates to the interviewing of prospective missionaries by bishops. Will you please be more careful about recommending men