

President David O. McKay:

Our next speaker will be Marion G. Romney, whom you have just sustained as a member of the Council of the Twelve

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My beloved brothers and sisters, coming to this stand and speaking to you is not a new experience. This is the twenty-second time I have climbed up here in the last ten and a half years. I am not a stranger to you. Many of you know me—some of you may know me too well. This call has set up a tremendous emotional reaction in me. I didn't think there could be such a big tempest in such a little teapot. I suppose that I need the help of the Lord now more than I ever needed it in my life. Will you please ask him to give me strength to make a few remarks appropriate to this occasion.

RESPECT FOR OFFICE

The great respect I have always had for the office to which I am now called contributes greatly to the emotional strain I am experiencing. Men who held these offices were godlike men in the eyes of my parents. When they came to Old Mexico where I lived as a little child, I almost thought they were of a different race.

I remember what we thought of President Joseph F. Smith when he came. I don't remember any of the brethren who are now living coming down.

I have always thought of this office as the office of a special witness of the Redeemer of the world, and when I think about the Redeemer of the world, I think about the great council in the spirit world when he undertook to be the instrument and made the sacrifice to put into operation the gospel of redemption. I understand that God the Eternal Father was the author of the plan. I get that from President John Taylor. Jesus sponsored it.

"I will go," he said. I believe Brother Whitney put it in these terms: "Mine be the willing sacrifice, the endless glory thine."

EVENTS IN LIFE OF REDEEMER

Next I think of the Redeemer on the mount with the brother of Jared twenty-two hundred years before he was born in the flesh, as the infant child of Mary. There I get the idea of what I think a spirit looks like. The brother of Jared thought he had beheld flesh and blood, but the Spirit spake to him, saying, "Thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood." (Ether 3:9.)

Then he said, "Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image.

"Behold this body," [which looked to the brother of Jared like a body of flesh and blood and bone] said the Spirit Jesus Christ, "this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (See Ether 3:15-16.)

And then I think of the Redeemer, that great spirit who created the world under the direction of God, our Eternal Father, entering the body of a tiny infant in a manger in Bethlehem.

I think of him in the temple at the age of twelve already somewhat conversant with his mission, when he said to his mother—I don't think in any sense of disrespect when she chided him a little about being there without her knowledge: ". . . wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49.)

I think about him through his ministry. I could mention many cases, but I shall not take much time. I think about his baptism as the beginning of the pattern that we must follow. I think about him at the well with the Samaritan woman when he said that whosoever would drink of the water that he would give would never thirst again, because that water would be a well of living water, springing up into eternal life.

I think about him when Lazarus had passed away, and Mary and Martha came out to meet him. I don't remember the conversation exactly, but I believe Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," and Jesus said, ". . . I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:21, 25-26.)

I think of him in the temple during those last days of his mortal life. I think of him in Gethsemane. I will pass the scene. It moves me too deeply. He suffered for me there, and for you. I think of him on the cross. I think of him in the Grove with the Prophet Joseph, and the Father, his Father, the Father of that Spirit of his which appeared to the brother of Jared, the Father of my spirit, as President Clark has just explained, the Father of the spirits of all men.

When I think about being a special witness of him, and I remember that Peter, James, and John could not stay awake through his last suffering in Gethsemane, I think of some who have failed. I don't want to fail.

I think of those who have given their lives for the witness. I have counted that. If it should be necessary, I hope I will not falter to give my life for the testimony of Jesus. I know he lives. I doubt if I will know it better when I meet him.

LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN

I shall not go further. I would like to pay my respects to these men. I know President McKay holds the authority that the Prophet

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had, and I know the Prophet held the authority that Peter held. I have loved President McKay for a long, long time. He doesn't remember when I first fell in love with him. I guess he doesn't remember when you did, either.

It was down in Los Angeles in the winter of 1912 and 1913. We were known then as Mormon refugees. We had lost our home in Mexico—invited out down there. Brother McKay came to Los Angeles; he came to Sunday School, and he took a glass of water. He had a pen in his hand. He showed us how clear and beautiful the water was, and then he dropped a drop of ink in the water, and it clouded it all through, and he said to us little fellows, "That is what sin does to a life," and I have ever since then, President McKay, been trying to keep that sin out of my life.

I met him over in Australia. I got frightened of him over there. I was president of the conference. They used to call districts "conferences." I was conducting, and when he looked at his watch, he said, "Brother Romney, I believe it is thirty seconds late." So the next time we started a meeting, we weren't late, and Brother McKay looked at his watch and said, "Brother Romney, I believe it is fifteen seconds early."

Then he didn't take me with him when he went up to visit the Genolean Caves; he took Elder Bischoff. I remember when he came back and taught us a lesson, telling us how those great stalagmites and stalactites in the caves were made by infinitesimally small deposits from drops of water.

Then he told us that was how a life was built. Every thought we thought, every word we spoke, every deed we did, registered on our character. I never have forgotten that, either.

I have always loved President Richards since I knew him. I went out with him in my early work as an Assistant, and I remember how he conducted conferences. He did it with the skill with which an artist paints a picture. I think everything he does is done beautifully. I sustain him with all my heart.

Then this great man, President Clark, has been closest to me of all the Presidency, in the administrations of President Grant and President Smith and now President McKay, because he has been directing for the Presidency the work that I have been assigned to. I don't think there is a man in the world who loves righteousness and is acquainted with Brother Clark who doesn't love him. He has been to me as a father. I love you, Brother Clark, with all the strength of my life.

I love Brother Smith, President Joseph Fielding Smith. He has been most kind and thoughtful of me. I thought he treated me especially good until I got talking to the other brethren about him and found out that he treated them all the same.

Now I love all the brethren, every one of them. I don't go down through the Twelve, except to mention Brother Lee and Brother Moyle. They are my closest associates. Brother Lee is a

seer. I know I'll never go wrong if I'm with him, and I know I'll never go hungry if I'm with Brother Moyle because he is so liberal.

I love the brethren I have worked with, Thomas and Clifford and Alma, and Nicholas who passed away, the Patriarch, the Seventy, the Bishopric, and these new men who come in. Some of them I have been close to.

GRATITUDE FOR HERITAGE

Now I would just like to say I am grateful for my heritage. Both my families are of long-standing in the Church, the Redds and the Romneys. I am claimed by both of them. The Redds claim I am a Romney, and the Romneys claim I am a Redd, but I am proud of them both. I am very grateful for my father, the late George S. Romney, and my sainted mother who sits here today in tears. I am grateful for the righteous home they reared me in—Mother, I tell you I am grateful.

I am grateful for my own family and their support of me; my sons and daughter-in-law, my sixteen-month-old granddaughter who gives me lots of joy, and last, but not least, my beloved companion, the sweetheart of my youth, and the mother of my children. They have never put a straw in my way. We had been married seventeen years when I became an Assistant to the Twelve, and I had only been away from home, leaving Ida alone two nights. When I first started traveling around the Church, it was hard for her. She used to cry every time I left and every time I came back. Now she only cries when I come back.

LOYALTY OF MEMBERS

I am very grateful to you, my brothers and sisters. I love every one of you. I know some of the contributions you make. As I go about the Church and see you come to the meetings the brethren authorize me to call, I learn your hearts and your loyalty.

I sat in a meeting this morning with two regional councils, and I saw them yield to the decisions that have been made by these great men of the Presidency with the finest spirit of unity that I have ever beheld. I love you for what you have done for me as you have received me into your homes.

I will do everything I can to serve you, and I will do everything I can to honor this high calling. God bless you, and God bless me, and will you please pray for me that no enemy shall dent the small sector of the line which I am assigned to defend, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened, Elder Marion G. Romney, was this day sustained as a member of the Council of the Twelve.