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establish themselves in their homes and in their lives as husbands and wives and fathers and mothers, to build upon that sure foundation, for if they do, they cannot fall, and they will not be deceived by the practices of the world.

I sustain the brethren with all my heart. I know that this is the work of

the Lord. This is not just another Church. This is the Church of Jesus Christ, and he heads it and directs it through these instruments, these holy men in his hands.

I testify to this, and pledge my allegiance to it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Of the First Council of the Seventy

MY BRETHREN and sisters, I humbly ask an interest in your faith and prayers, and the Spirit of God, to direct the few things that I may say this afternoon.

I have a strong desire and feeling in my heart in this closing session of the conference to encourage the Latter-day Saints to keep God's commandments. I know that there is nothing in this world that is as important to members of the Church as to keep all the commandments. In fact, the very purpose, the reason for our existence here in mortality, is to prove us, to see if we will "... live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God." (D. & C. 84:44; 98:11.)

As President Clark pointed out in his masterful discourse this morning, Jesus Christ, at the grand council in heaven, declared that the sons and daughters of God would be placed upon this earth to "... prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." And the Master gave the promise to them that those who were successful in doing so, would "... have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever." (Abraham 3:25-26.)

In due course of time, Father Adam and Mother Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden. They partook of the forbidden fruit. The Fall came about; thus they became mortal beings. A veil was drawn over their minds, and they forgot their pre-mortal existence and the gospel by which they had previously lived in the spirit world. It was necessary, therefore, for Jehovah,

even Jesus Christ, to reveal to them the gospel plan.

As time passed, time and time again, little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept, doctrine upon doctrine, the gospel was revealed by the Savior to Father Adam and Mother Eve. They rejoiced in all the revelations that they received; and faithfully they rendered obedience to the commandments of God. We read in the Pearl of Great Price:

And he [meaning the Lord] gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord.

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. (Moses 5:5-6.)

Now, some people may regard Adam's answer as one of blind obedience. I think his answer is one of the most sublime illustrations in the scripture of faithful obedience. Although he did not know the full answer why, yet he knew that God would not tell him to do anything which would be harmful for him. He was convinced that all that God commanded him to do was for his own good; therefore, he obeyed, and later on he received light.

It would be a wonderful thing if all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would follow Adam's example. When the holy prophets—the First Presidency of the Church,

the Twelve Apostles, God's anointed prophets, seers, and revelators upon this earth—give instructions to the Church members, if we would all render obedience to their instructions, having a firm conviction in our hearts that they speak the word of God; although we do not have the answer yet, knowing in due time we should receive light as did Father Adam.

It is my testimony that such would be the case. I am not only willing to follow the counsel of the brethren but also glad to obey God's commandments as given by his prophets.

We are told that there are two masters in this world. The one Master is Jesus Christ; the other master is Satan. The Savior himself taught:

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Matt. 6:24.)

Alma, one of the great Book of Mormon prophets, taught: "For every man receiveth wages of him whom he listeth to obey." (Alma 3:27.) If we list to obey Jesus Christ, as our Master, we walk in the light: we receive peace, happiness, prosperity, and the other good blessings of this life, and in the world to come, eternal life in our Father's kingdom. If we choose to follow Lucifer as our master, we shall receive the wages which are his to bestow upon us. On certain occasions those who obey Satan receive as their wages misery, unhappiness, sorrow, and disappointment in this life; and, one might say, on all occasions, they experience the loss of their eternal rewards in the world to come.

One of the most apt illustrations of one who chose to follow Lucifer, that comes to my mind at this time, was Cain. We read in the Pearl of Great Price:

And Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord. (Moses 5:18.)

Cain was obedient to Satan's com-

mandment. Of course, God rejected that offering, and Cain became very angry. And then the Lord appeared unto Cain, and said:

. . . Why art thou wroth? Why is thy countenance fallen?

If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou shalt hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire. (*Ibid.*, 5:22-23.)

Yet Cain continued to love Satan more than God. He entered into a secret covenant with Satan to murder his brother Abel for gain. "And he gloried, [so the scripture says], in his wickedness." (*Ibid.*, 5:31.) And after this terrible crime had been committed, Cain received his "wages from him whom he listeth to obey." He was cursed by the Lord with a dark skin. He lost the Holy Priesthood. He lost his eternal soul, becoming a son of perdition. Thus, he was turned over to Satan—his master.

God, our Eternal Father, is very much concerned about you and me and every one of his children here upon this earth regarding their keeping his commandments. When we keep his commandments, it gives him joy; his heart is caused to rejoice. When we disobey his commandments, his heart is caused to sorrow.

Enoch had the privilege of looking down through the stream of time in a vision. He and God were observing human history in that vision. When the scene came to the period of the time of Noah and they were observing what was taking place during that period, "God wept." (See *Ibid.*, 7:28.) Enoch was very much surprised to see that God would weep, and asked: "Why is it that God weeps? Everything is happy in heaven, everything is peaceful there, everybody worships you." In fact, Enoch could see no reason why God should weep; but God said:

. . . Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the

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day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency.

And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood.

. . . among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren. (*Ibid.*, 7:32-33, 36.)

Because God knew the calamity that should come to those people, he wept and declared that the heavens also wept over them.

In his conference talk, President S. Dilworth Young gave a wonderful illustration on God's concern over our obedience which I would like to repeat today.

King Saul had recently come to the throne when an invading Bedouin tribe from the Arabian desert came into the land of Canaan and molested the Israelites. The voice of the Lord came to Samuel, the prophet, commanding him to command King Saul to take his armies and go in pursuit of those invaders, the Amalekites, and destroy or kill every man, woman, and child, both male and female, and all the animals, as well as to destroy utterly all of the properties. Saul received this commandment, went in pursuit of the Amalekites but did not fully keep the commandment. He brought back the fattest and best of the sheep and cattle, as spoils of war.

God was very displeased with Saul's disobedience; and the voice of the Lord spoke to Samuel again, telling him that Saul had

. . . turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. (1 Samuel 15:11.)

And then the Lord explained to Samuel what Saul had done. Thereupon Samuel went out to meet King Saul as he was coming home from the war. Saul heard that Samuel was coming, so probably he hid the cattle and sheep behind a hill. When those

two men met, Saul greeted Samuel as the chosen prophet of God, and said: "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (*Ibid.*, 15:13); stating that he had obeyed God's command in detail, having completely destroyed the Amalekites.

And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of oxen which I hear?

And Saul said, They have brought . . . a few of the fattest and best of the cattle and sheep for the purpose of offering sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. (*Ibid.*, 15:14-15.)

And then Samuel made this memorable statement:

Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. (*Ibid.*, 15:22.)

I would that every Latter-day Saint would place deeply that statement in his heart and keep it there forever. Furthermore, I would that every Church member from this time forward would repeat every few days: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"; and obedience is even better than the wealth of this world or than any position or honor that mortal man can bestow upon us. Best of all our attainments, therefore, is to obey the voice of God in all things and at all times.

We have been told by the holy prophets throughout the entire course of history that we will receive our blessings from the hand of God according to the obedience that we render to his holy laws. Therefore, the rewards and punishments are, one might say, based upon a scientific formula. The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—
And when we obtain any blessing from

God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated. (D. & C. 130:20-21.)

God, our Eternal Father, is not as greatly concerned over which race of people we belong to nor over the color of our skins as he is over our righteousness. He is not concerned with how wealthy we are—whether we drive a Cadillac or walk; nor does he care to which family we belong; but he is deeply concerned over what kind of hearts we have. In other words, it makes a vital difference to him whether we render obedience to his commandments or not.

The question oftentimes comes to the minds of thinking people, especially young people: "What rewards come as a result of obedience to God's commandments?" Even from the very beginning, and in every gospel dispensation, the followers of Jesus Christ have been told by the holy prophets that those who render obedience to God's commandments eventually will find rest in the presence of the Lord. There they will receive a blessed immortality. In fact, in the very beginning when Adam and his posterity began to populate the earth, the scriptures report:

And the Lord God called upon men by the Holy Ghost everywhere and commanded them that they should repent;

And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved; and as many as believed not and repented not, should be damned; and the words went forth out of the mouth of God in a firm decree; wherefore they must be fulfilled. (Moses 5:14-15.)

When you and I became members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and were baptized, we entered into a covenant to keep God's commandments—all of his commandments. We did not covenant to obey just the gospel laws that meet our convenience, the ones that we like to keep, but all of God's commandments.

When we received the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, we received it with an oath and a covenant; and the oath and covenant is that we will live "...

by every word that proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God." (D. & C. 98:11.) Jesus Christ has promised that if we do so all that the Father has will be given unto us. (*Ibid.*, 84:38.)

Now, what does the Father have? The greatest blessing that he has to give to his faithful children, according to his own declaration, is eternal life. (*Ibid.*, 14:7.) Also, he has called this gift exaltation in the presence of God. Godhood is another way to describe that same gift. (*Ibid.*, 132:19-20.) Therefore, all those who love God and keep his commandments will receive eternal life, godhood, or exaltation, which means that they will rise in the resurrection and enter into celestial glory to be made joint heirs with Jesus Christ and receive all that the Father has.

I am as thoroughly convinced as I am that I am standing here speaking to you people, in fact, I know that if you and I will keep God's commandments day by day, walking humbly with our God, with "a broken heart and a contrite spirit," as the Lord has commanded us to do (Micah 6:8; III Nephi 9:20), eventually we will hear the voice of God invite us into his presence; and, as the scriptures state, we shall "... pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to ... [our] exaltation and glory in all things, ..." (D. & C. 132:19.)

If we prove faithful in keeping all of God's commandments, we shall receive a glorious celestialization, a comparable degree of happiness, joy, peace, and power with that which God, the Eternal Father, and the Only Begotten Son have attained. In other words, all that the Father has will be given unto us. This is what is in store for the faithful Saints, for those who love God and keep his commandments.

I humbly ask our Father in heaven to bless every Latter-day Saint in the world; that all of us will vow to keep God's commandments and that we will walk by every word that proceedeth forth from his mouth from this time forward. I do so, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.