

did I not heed his counsel. If I have any advice to give to you this morning, it is that I believe that obedience starts with the bishopric; that is, the Church member should be obedient to his bishopric, then to his stake presidency, then to the General Authorities. As you learn, bit by bit, to be obedient in the little things, so when the large and great things are propounded to you, you will neither falter by the wayside nor fall.

ELDER ELRAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS. During the year that I have now served as a high priest assigned to assist the Quorum of the Twelve, I have increased my admiration for all of you people who are serving the Lord; for those who are willing to lay their own affairs aside to work on welfare projects; willing to travel for miles and miles, time after time, to attend their meetings, willing to give of their substance, their all, if necessary, for the work of the Lord, without equivocation. I have increased my admiration for these, for you, for all who have thus testified before the Lord that they love him—receiving from the Lord; giving to the Lord. That is as it should be.

How well trained, how well prepared, and how well tested, how useful they will be to him, when he comes again to reign upon the earth! They, I should think, who have proved themselves thus, would be among those whom he shall call forth to administer the affairs of his kingdom under his personal direction.

It is evident that the families of those who are thus engaged in Church work are among the happiest families in the world, because those who thus serve the Lord are recipients of that great blessing, peace of mind, which I think is one of the priceless blessings of life.

But whenever I think of these groups and individuals who thus serve the Lord,

I am thankful and deeply grateful for my testimony. I do not know why I should have been blessed in this day to come forth at a time when the gospel is on the earth and the prophets are on the earth, but that they are, I have no doubt. And my thanksgiving goes to my Father in heaven, for the privilege of standing here now and bearing you my testimony, which I could not do without the gift of the Lord, and I do it in the name of Christ. Amen.

I wonder about those who, with us, have membership in this great Church and yet are satisfied merely to have their names upon the records; who do not feel impelled to give of their substance and of their time and talents, but who are willing to let suffice the fact that they are members of the Church.

Usually, they are born of goodly parents. They are willing to give passive acknowledgment of the truth of the gospel and of the reality of the Church of Jesus Christ. They, sometimes, give contributions but desire to be left alone, requesting that the ward teachers and Relief Society block teachers pass them by, feeling that the teachers can do them no good. How I wish we could do more for these members!

They point with justifiable pride to the devotion to and sacrifices for the Church made by their ancestors, and it is well that they should. My brothers and sisters, we should all be proud of our progenitors. Some of us forget, however, that as someone rightly said, no matter how tall your grandfather was, you have to do your own growing. So it is in this great Church—we all must realize that salvation is an individual matter; that none of us can be taken into the celestial kingdom on the backs of others. We must earn our own position, both here and hereafter. It is not merely an acknowledgment that God lives and that this is the Church

Saturday, October 4

Second Day

of Jesus Christ that will save us, but the application of that knowledge in good works.

Jesus once declared,

Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 7:21.)

And Jacob, speaking to the people in his day, some five hundred years before Christ, spoke of this same thing. He used stronger terms than I would care to use, if I were not quoting him.

But wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!

O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God. (II Nephi 9:27-29.)

And so, my brothers and sisters, our knowledge must be translated into service; into good works.

Last spring, I attended the quarterly conference in one of the stakes in southern Idaho. Among the missionaries who reported was Sister Santana, a young woman of Mexican nationality. She had come to that stake to report her mission to those who had sent her. One of the families there had provided the funds for her mission, and it was reported that this Mexican girl had been instrumental in bringing into the Church more than fifty people during her time in the mission field. Among other things, she said through an interpreter; "My testimony is the brightest gem in my possession. It is of more worth to me than is my life. I hope to bear it in good deeds." And she added, to those who had helped her, "*Muchas gracias.*" It touched our hearts to see

her with this priceless combination of treasures, a testimony, and a desire to bear it in good deeds.

Any individual who has a testimony that is borne in clean living and in good works can expect to feel in that testimony a tremendous motivating power. It will help to direct him in his life, to guide him, to prompt him, to warn him. It becomes a formidable weapon against evil itself.

Some have asked, "How may one receive a living, impelling, life-directing testimony, such as you speak of? How is such knowledge obtained?" The question was answered by Jesus, when he said:

... My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. (John 7:16-17.)

So any individual who will qualify himself by doing the will of God, may find this same assurance, and there is no other way that I know anything about.

The source of this knowledge was also explained by the Lord when in speaking to his disciples he asked this question:

... But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 16:15-17.)

Now, Latter-day Saints accept these teachings, and multitudes testify, from their own experience, that they are true. Testimonies borne by individuals in conformity to the laws of the Lord, and through engaging in good works, are sure to induce happiness and bring contentment and peace to such individuals and to their families. Such testimonies may well lead one to exaltation in the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, those who may say, "Oh, I believe these principles all right, but I am not living as I should," or "I am too busy to accept an assignment in the ward or the stake or the quorum," or "I feel that when I have worked all week at my job, I should have the Sabbath day off, to seek pleasure and relaxation and to do what ever I would like to do." They have a testimony, it seems to me, that is barren and fruitless. To that individual, and perhaps to his family, it will cause them that to lose many of the sweet things of life such as we have heard related here this morning. Indeed such a philosophy may become the means of preventing the realization of the great eternal blessings which the Lord God would have them enjoy!

Again, those of us who bear testimony should live in harmony with our beliefs, declared in the Article of Faith, "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men," and we should reflect these attributes in our daily lives.

Not long ago I was told of a man in one of the professions, who bore his testimony in good deeds, and in "doing good to all men," at least all men who came to him. In spite of the pressure from the group to increase the fees that were being paid by their patients—in spite of recommendations to "make them pay, and to get all you can while you can," this fine man continued to pursue the practice he had followed in charging reasonable rates for his services and avoiding what he thought to be exorbitant and excessive charges.

Now, it seems to me, he is bearing his testimony in good deeds, as Sister Santana wished to do. He has peace of mind. He has his self-respect. He has the respect of his friends, his clients, and incidentally, he has almost more business than he can take care of.

A true measure of one's devotion to a principle is measured not by what he professes, but by what he manifests—day by day.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, a great philosopher, Confucius, put it this

way: "Those who know the truth are not equal to those who love it, and those who love it are not equal to those who live it."

Well,

What doth it profit, my brethren, although man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . .

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:14, 18-20.)

Throughout the Church, thousands and thousands are testifying by their upright lives that God lives, that they are affiliated with the true Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth and by their untiring service and their desire to keep the commandments of God, leaders and members alike, as Abraham did, testify by their willingness to perform any and all duties that may be required of them of the Lord.

Like Sister Santana, they bear their testimonies in good deeds. They are, "... doers of the Word, and not hearers, only."

May each of us feel some responsibility in reaching out to those other wonderful people, well-born, well-qualified, and capable, and try to help them to translate their dormant testimonies into works and service of which the Lord approves. This I pray, and bear my testimony to the truth of this work, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

You have just heard Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve.

Our concluding speaker this morning will be Elder Oscar W. McConkie, recently president of the California Mission.