

Saturday, April 4

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive
our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil: For thine is the king-
dom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen. (Matt. 6:9-13.)

And so we await his kingdom. We
live day by day in preparation of his
coming, for *Christ will come again*.

It was John Fiske, the historian at
Harvard fifty years ago, who wrote:

The future is lighted for us with the
radiant colors of hope. Strife and sorrow
shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign
supreme. The dream of poets, the lesson
of priest and prophet, the inspiration of

the great musician, is confirmed in the
light of modern knowledge and as we gird
ourselves up for the work of life, we may
look forward to the time when in the truest
sense, the kingdoms of this world shall
become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall
reign forever and ever, the King of kings
and the Lord of lords.

President David O. McKay:

President Levi Edgar Young, senior
president of the First Council of the
Seventy has just addressed us.

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, As-
sistant to the Twelve, will now speak
to us.

ELDER ELRAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

HOW BEAUTIFUL it is, my brothers and
sisters, and how satisfying to the
soul that hungers and thirsts after
righteousness to sit here and listen to
the voices of these inspired leaders as
they teach us and expound the truths
of the gospel, unadulterated, and un-
changed, and everlasting! I have been
thrilled with the proceedings of the
meetings so far in this conference, and
I am grateful to these brethren who
are so firm and steadfast, so unassum-
ing, and yet so vigorous in the defense
of the truth.

I hope that you will bear with me,
brothers and sisters, for a few minutes.
I should like to talk about a virtue,
which I think becomes all of those who
claim to be the children of God, the
Saints of the Lord, his followers. I
concluded to do this after listening yester-
day to the mission presidents as they
reported their labors, their successes,
and the success of the missionaries. They
did it so humbly that I concluded that
humility must be one of the great vir-
tues that helps to bring about success
in doing the work of the Lord.

As I sat in that meeting, I turned to
the songbook that was there and found
a song, the words of which were writ-

ten by Eliza R. Snow. I had never
before noticed it. I should like to read
two stanzas.

The trials of the present day
Require the Saints to watch and pray
That they may keep the narrow way
To celestial glory.
For even Saints may turn aside
For fear of ill that may betide
Or else induced by worldly pride
And lose celestial glory.

If we examine the history of the na-
tions of the past that have been great
and powerful but that have fallen, we
will find nothing in them, I am sure,
that would lead us to believe that any
nation, or any civilization, or any peo-
ple can find security merely in its own
power and its own self-sufficiency.

The facts of history remind us that
where nations and peoples continue to
ignore the principles of justice and of
right in regard to their peoples and
the peoples of other nations, and where
they put aside the teachings of God,
they experience difficulties, hardships,
calamities, and, in the due time of the
Lord, history has proved that many of
them have been destroyed.

A love of power and personal ambi-

tion in the hearts of individual leaders and their associates, pride and self-sufficiency that go with ambition and power, cause them to forget that the real God of the earth is Jesus Christ; that the "earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and that it does not belong to any people, or any nation, or any combination of nations.

Now, that same pride, my brothers and sisters, and the same self-sufficiency that nations and their leaders sometimes feel give them security, may cause an individual to forget that the Lord is God, and may cause him to lose faith in these principles which have been expounded here today unless he repents and turns to Christ, and takes upon him the name of Christ, recognizing him for what he is, the Son of God, the Savior, and the Redeemer of the world, who was crucified, and who in three days came forth from the grave, making it possible for all to receive redemption therefrom.

King Benjamin, recognized the destructiveness of pride and the necessity of humility. He taught this to his people saying to them:

For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. (Mosiah 3:19.)

And he continues to remind his people, saying:

For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind? (*Ibid.*, 4:19.)

My brothers and sisters, we are all dependent upon the Lord. The riches of the earth are his and are provided us through his mercy only. Pride and

self-sufficiency would lead us to believe otherwise. They are destroyers of the best that is in men, but on the other hand, humility, submissiveness, willingness to abide by the teachings of the Lord bring out the best that is in men because they become teachable and can be molded into agents usable to him. One must constantly remind himself and guard against pride or he will find himself taking to himself part of the glory that the Lord has said is his.

President Grant once reminded us that there are two spirits striving with all men—one telling them what to do that is right, and the other telling them to do that which will please themselves, that will gratify their own pride and ambitions. So, as King Benjamin said, unless we yield "to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man . . . and becometh as a child," meek and submissive, and gentle, full of love, we are likely to spend our time in gratifying our own pride and following our own ambitions, and thus fail to develop the spiritual attributes and power. We will be led away from the divine destiny which may be ours.

Now, humility is not an abject, groveling, self-despising spirit. It seems to me that it is rather a right and proper estimate of what one is in the sight of God. When we have that estimate of ourselves, we become as children, and we realize that he controls the universe. We learn then, to appreciate even the very air that we breathe, and our ability to go and come and to see and to do, and to accept and to reject. But until he can submit himself to this status, man is an "enemy to God."

True humility, in my opinion, implies acknowledgment, thanksgiving, prayerfulness, all those virtues which become a Latter-day Saint. It is becoming to an individual no matter what his status in life, to acknowledge the Lord for his goodness and for his mercy, to be humble and prayerful and submissive to his will. True humility is uplifting, ennobling.

Alma, speaking to his son, Shiblon,

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emphasized this very thing, when he said:

See that ye are not lifted up unto pride; yea, see that ye do not boast in your own wisdom, nor of your much strength.

Use boldness, but not overbearance. (Alma 38:11-12.)

I think that most fathers could accept that counsel and give the same to their sons.

Pride and ingratitude in the hearts of men are grievous sins in the sight of God, and all of us are guilty of them; I know I am; I suppose you are to a degree as are people generally. When we stop to think, as has been expressed here today, that the Son of God created the world and all that in it is, and that by the shedding of his blood he made possible the redemption of men from the grave, we should not become self-sufficient, but we should remember that we are here living simply because of his mercy and of his kindness and of his love.

Humility, in my opinion, implies a grateful heart, and the Lord has warned us against ingratitude, for in the Doctrine and Covenants he has said:

And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments. (D. & C. 59:21.)

How can a man or a woman or a child learn to become humble and submissive, and gentle and meek? He has made that plain also here in the fifty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and I would like to read a verse or two.

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. Thou shalt not steal; neither commit adultery, nor kill, nor do anything like unto it.

Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.

Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High. (*Ibid.*, 59:5-10.)

And yet, only a part of us see fit to do some of these according to our statistics and reports. The person with true humility will not seek to aggrandize himself. He will serve for the sake of service. He will give his gifts in secret and let it be found out by accident. He will realize that all knowledge comes from God—for he knows all. He will not be contentious, unruly, or critical. He will not profane the name of Deity. As a literal child of God, he will feel it a privilege to do his will and keep his commandments.

Finally, the Lord has left us this: In order to shape ourselves to be fit candidates for his kingdom by leading lives of meekness and humility before him, he admonishes us to "let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practise virtue and holiness before me." (*Ibid.*, 38:24-25.)

And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old. . . .

And let your preaching be the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness. (*Ibid.*, 38:39, 41.)

What I have tried to say is that in order to be usable in the hands of the Lord, we must banish pride and self-sufficiency and be meek and humble. We must be submissive and easy to be entreated. We must

love the Lord with all our heart, mind and strength and our neighbour as ourselves. (See Matt. 23:37-39.)

I appreciate the opportunity to receive

this training in this great Church. I testify to you that I know that God lives, and that Jesus is the Christ, and that he, through Joseph Smith, restored the gospel to the earth in this day as it is predicted in the scriptures of old, and that only by following the pattern given by the Savior can we receive the blessings of eternal life.

To this I testify and do so in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen has just spoken to us.

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing that inspired hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?" Elder Richard P. Condie will lead us.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President David O. McKay:

Our next speaker will be Elder Antoine R. Ivins, of the First Council of the Seventy, and he will be followed by Elder Ezra Taft Benson.

ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS, if I say anything that will be helpful to you this afternoon, it will be because you join your faith and prayers with mine that the Lord may bless me.

The other night Sister Ivins and I attended a meeting in the Assembly Hall in which the theme of the Mutual Improvement Associations was treated:

... be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12.)

I would like to tell you the thoughts that that has brought to me.

Be thou an example of the believers—

I would like to add there the faithful Christian believer—"in word." What is the word of the faithful Christian? In those days the most electrifying thing that the world had experienced in years was so close to them that they no doubt were still startled by it—the resurrection, the actual, glorified resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. We are going to celebrate it now, but it was a new thought in that day, that it could be possible. It became a reality, and it was the thing that was passing from believer to believer, publicly and in private conversation. The resurrection of Jesus Christ verified the statement that he was

and is the Son of God, and that must have been the theme of every devout Christian of that day, just as it must be today. Of course, they would amplify it, after bearing testimony that Christ had risen, that he was the Son of God, that he was born of Mary by miraculous means; then they would pass on to his teachings as to how men and women should live to gain an exaltation in the kingdom of God. That, it seems to me, would have been and should have been and must have been the "word" of every faithful Christian in that day. Likewise it should be your "word" and my "word" today. We, however, have something to add to that because we must tell the world not only these things but also that not too far back, Christ the Lord and his Father appeared to the boy Prophet Joseph Smith and brought back to man the testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Then we must teach also that Peter, James, and John, John the Baptist, the Angel Moroni, and the men who had held the keys of the various past dispensations, came back to the Prophet Joseph Smith restoring unto him the keys, all of the keys that had ever been given to man through the various dispensations of time. We are under that obligation, too, and we must do it, not