

Friday, October 2

First Day

and that divine beings restored to the Prophet Joseph Smith the gospel of Jesus Christ as he established it in the Meridian of Time.

I bear you that testimony this morning and pray that the influence of priesthood quorums, of auxiliaries, and of the missionaries may be more effective from this time on than ever before in leading the honest in heart of the whole world to turn their eyes up-

ward to the worship of God, our eternal Father, and give them power to control the animal nature and live in the spirit, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Our next speaker will be Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin, Presiding Bishop of the Church.

## BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

*Presiding Bishop of the Church*

**P**RESIDENT MCKAY, my beloved brethren and sisters, this has been a most inspirational hour. I am sure that the Lord has manifested through his servant the course that he wants his children to follow and pursue here in mortality.

Brothers and sisters, do you believe God is the same yesterday, today, and forever?

Do you believe he is a God of order in all things?

Do you believe that he governs the universe by the application of divine law?

Many would answer these three questions as follows: some in the affirmative, some not sure, and possibly some negatively. Those who are not spiritually inclined might indicate that they believe there is a God, a higher intelligence which governs the universe, and they point out some of the evidences that are found in the many forms of nature—the orderly sequence of the seasons, each in its place, spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and to the creation of storms based upon the application of divine principles; the sun, the moon, and the stars all held in their orbits by the application of the laws and powers best known to the Creator.

The scientist in his laboratory slowly unravels the wonders of the creation which evidences the existence of a divine being by whom the universe was created, by whose hand the animal

world, the vegetable world, and the mineral world are ruled.

I wish to submit another question: What of man and woman, son and daughter of the Creator of the universe, created in his image, according to Genesis 1:27?

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Then another question: Is there a definite set of laws for the spiritual and the mental growth and progress of man to the end that he might enjoy salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of our heavenly Father? Again some may answer in the affirmative; some may doubt; some may have a negative attitude.

Definitely fixed laws and powers govern nature, planets, and the universe which can only be changed by the will of God. Man, the greatest of God's creations, can and does fix the laws that govern his mortal life regardless of any divine plan that was devised for his good. He is blessed with intelligence far above all the other creations. Hence, he knows the difference between good and bad, and being blessed with the divine gift of free agency, can decide what course he will pursue in life.

Recently, a noted reverend doctor declared, "There is nothing to the *One Church Idea*," which, from my point of view, is an admission by the reverend

doctor: that there is not anything to the idea of a divine plan for the blessing of our heavenly Father's children. There are many who think as the reverend doctor, and they say, "After all, we are all striving towards eternal life. It makes no difference which path we follow, for our destination is the same." To advocate there is but one God, one faith, and one baptism is considered by many to be narrow and unjust.

In this day and age the words of Paul are applicable when he declared to the Galatians:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. (Galatians 1:6.)

The concept of the Godhead has changed since the days of the Savior. He said:

. . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . (John 14:9.)

The idea of one Church, one gospel, and in fact, one Savior, in the minds of many, is a fallacy.

It would not be consistent thinking to believe that God is orderly in the governing of the universe and indifferent and disorderly in providing a plan of life and salvation for his greatest creation, namely, his children.

But in the midst of all of this confusion and so-called broadmindedness by the teachers of man-made religions, the voice of a young Prophet was heard, coming from western New York, a young man who again declared that there is one Church, one God, one faith, one baptism. This young man dared to tell the world that he actually saw the Father and the Son. He reaffirmed to the world that God was a personage with body, parts, and passions; that Jesus Christ, the despised Nazarene who was crucified upon Calvary's hill, actually lived. He conversed and talked with him. He received definite instructions, and among other things, the resurrected Savior said:

. . . they draw near to me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me. . . . (Joseph Smith 2:19.)

This young American Prophet boldly declared to the world that an angel had appeared to him and entrusted to his care an ancient record which contained the history of the dealings of the Lord with the people that lived upon this, the American continent in ancient times, and there was contained in this sacred record the divine plan of salvation given to mankind through Jesus Christ when he visited the people upon the American continent.

He declared to the world that John the Baptist appeared to him and conferred upon him the Aaronic Priesthood; that Peter, James, and John, the former apostolic Presidency, bestowed upon him the Melchizedek Priesthood; that Elijah came and gave him the keys for the work of the dead, Moses the keys of gathering, and Elias the return of the spirit of the gospel.

In fact, he declared to the world that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ had been restored to the earth with the priesthood of God and all the offices and officers that existed in the ancient Church.

The reaction to his divine message and tidings of great joy was received with scorn. He was looked upon as a bigot, narrow-minded. Finally, he sealed his testimony with his blood.

Now, let us go to the law and the testimony to determine whether or not the claims of the Prophet Joseph were false or true. All Christians accept the Bible as the law and the testimony.

First: Did the Savior establish one Church or many churches?

Second: Were there definitely assigned officers in the Church?

Third: Was there divine authority upon the earth and one gospel?

Reading from I Corinthians, 12th Chapter, 28th Verse:

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Friday, October 2

First Day

Here we see the servant of God speaking of *the Church*, one church not many churches.

And again we read in Ephesians 5:23:

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

—one Church, only one, of which Christ was the head.

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. (*Ibid.*, 5:24.)

Here is evidence where Christ is the head of the Church, one Church not many churches.

And again in Ephesians 4, Verses 4 and 5:

There is one body [one church], and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

These are a few of the evidences found in the law and testimony which bear out the great truth—there was but one church organized by the Savior during his ministry, and in the establishment of his Church, there was but one organization, and in that organization there were definitely assigned officers endowed with divine authority from on high.

We read from Ephesians 2:20 and 21:

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

Here twelve men were duly ordained and set apart as the Twelve Apostles of the first Church. We read in Mark 3:14, that he ordained the twelve, “. . . that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,” the gospel, to represent this great organization, the one Church, and proclaim the gospel to the known world of that time.

We read in Acts 11:22:

Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

Here we see a duly authorized servant of God being sent by the Church by those who were in authority in Jerusalem to Antioch to take care of Church affairs.

The Savior makes it very clear when he stated to the people in Matthew 7:13-14 (speaking of one Church, speaking of one organization with definitely ordained servants in the same, and one gospel):

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

This statement of the Savior to the world is definite and clear to the point that there can be but one way, his way, through his organization, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ—the one Church.

In his Church are found according to Paul in his message to the Ephesians 4:11:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

Christ was a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. We read in Hebrews 3:1:

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

In other words, all of the Apostles received the Melchizedek Priesthood. They received their apostolic calling from Jesus Christ.

We find in Luke 10:1, where there are seventies spoken of and who were sent out two and two to every city and place, whither he, the Church, would come.

In Acts 15:2, we read where Paul and Barnabas were going to settle a certain dispute, and they were sent up to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles and the elders about this question, elders in the Church.

We find in Philippians 1:1:

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

There were bishops in the organization of the Church as Christ established it.

In Luke 1:5, we read of Zacharias, the priest. We read of this same priest in Luke 1:8.

In Ephesians 4:11, Paul speaks of ordained teachers. In Philippians 1:1 the deacons are mentioned.

In Ephesians 4:11, are found evangelists or patriarchs.

As we carefully peruse the law and the testimony, we find there was but one Church organized by the Christ. He gave to the world but one gospel plan for the salvation and exaltation of mankind, and the priesthood of God, and in it officers duly ordained and authorized to serve in his kingdom upon the earth, his Church—one Church.

There were certain initiatory ordinances that had to be met to gain citizenship in the kingdom or membership in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was best illustrated on the Day of Pentecost when a multitude of people were gathered together, and Peter bore his testimony so strongly and impressively as to the mission of the crucified Savior that that great multitude arose as one man and asked the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered them:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts 2:38-39.)

Here are the principles and the ordinances whereby the children of our heavenly Father might enjoy membership in the one Church, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I might digress long enough to say that there are different forms of baptism upon the earth, I speak specifically of baptism by pouring or sprinkling for children. As I understand the words of Peter on the Day of Pentecost, baptism was for the purpose of forgiving sins. Small children are not guilty of sins because they do not know the difference between good and bad, and the Savior said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, . . . for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:16.)

It was a great source of inspiration and encouragement to future generations when Peter promised in a distant day the gift of the Holy Ghost or the spiritual baptism would be available to those afar off and those who were afar off, I believe, are the people that live in this generation.

And coming back to the Apostles of Christ's day, they observed a falling away—the apostasy was underway, for Paul declared to the Galatians:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. (Gal. 1:16.)

The Apostles were blessed with prophetic vision for we read in Acts 3:19:

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

And continuing on in Acts 3:20 and 21:

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

The apostasy was foreseen, and God revealed there would be a restitution, a restoration of all things before the

Friday, October 2

First Day

second coming of the Christ.

I think all Christians will admit that Christ atoned for all men, hence all men will enjoy the blessings of the resurrection.

Joseph Smith taught the world that in the plan of the gospel as it is represented in Mormonism, there will be a place for all of the Lord's children on the basis of merit as revealed in Revelation 20:12:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Modern revelation teaches us in the 76th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, that all men, the sons and daughters of God, will enjoy a place in one of the glories prepared for them, according to their deeds in the flesh.

I ask you if this is narrow. I ask if this is bigotry. But I want to say to you, brethren and sisters, this is the broadest plan of salvation that has been given to the world since the Savior was crucified for the sins of all men:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.)

It is a glorious truth and blessing to enjoy membership in the Church, the one Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, restored to the earth in exactly the same form as it existed when Christ established it first twenty centuries ago. Each and everyone of us can testify by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost that we know that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; that he is a God of order in all things; and that he spoke personally to the Prophet Joseph and assigned him the great task to establish upon the earth the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one Church, the one gospel, and teach the world that there was but one Savior, the Son of God.

Personally, I am not ashamed of the

restored gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as it has been given to us through his Prophet. I want to testify to you that there is but one Church, and that is the Church that carries his name, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I want to testify to you, brethren and sisters, that there stands at the head of this one Church of the Christ, a Prophet, an Apostle, who has all the same rights, keys, and authority that were enjoyed by Peter in the beginning, and that the same is equally true of the Twelve, and all of those who preside in high places in this great organization.

Certainly, when God the Father declared:

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man, (Moses 1:39)

he devised a plan whereby this could be done, and an organization through which it could be accomplished, namely, the organization of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is my testimony to you. I thank God for it. I hope that every member of this Church will have that same witness in his heart and that the children of men, as the prophet of God called all men this morning to repent of their ways and accept of this divine plan, and thus prevent the catastrophe which now faces the world. If the world will follow this divine counsel, there is no question but what we can live in the Spirit of the Christ, namely, the spirit of peace, for which all nations are struggling.

May God bless us. May we express our appreciation day by day for our membership and our many opportunities for salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of God, I humbly ask, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin, Presiding Bishop of the Church, has just concluded speaking.