

Saturday, October 3

Second Day

in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1.) His disciples went into the world to preach the gospel. I have given you an example of missionary zeal. And now one of ancient times: Paul, the Apostle, had become one of the disciples of the Lord. He went about preaching the gospel "with inspired eloquence and logic." He went to Athens. They took him to the Areopagus, saying: "... thou bringest certain strange things to our ears." (Acts 17:20.) You read Paul's discourse for yourselves. "It is the shortest important speech ever made, excepting only Lincoln's undying Gettysburg speech address. In less than one hundred and fifty words he put the argument for and assertion of the living God of salvation and the resurrection of the dead. In doing this he even included a quotation from the Greek poets." He had planted the seed. He had aroused interest.

As missionaries, we should find the good in people. We should judge all people not by their mistakes but by the abundance of their powers. Our work as teachers is based on love, and if we

have the love of our listeners, we must see to it that their merits are understood, rather than their faults found out.

Let us keep in mind the beautiful words of the Chinese Confucius, ages before Christ:

Those who know the truth are not equal to those who love it; and they who love it are not equal to those who live it.

I pray that we may all come to a deeper understanding of the gospel, that we may live as God would have us live. Amen.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President David O. McKay:

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Richard P. Condie led the Congregation and Choir in that song.

ELDER JOHN LONGDEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. (Matt. 5:6.)

IN THE OPENING remarks of our dear President McKay at the beginning of this conference he stated that he hoped our souls might be uplifted and inspired. I am sure you can bear witness with me that our heavenly Father has literally blessed us, and our souls have been uplifted because we have been inspired by the word of the Lord.

I have noted without exception that each who has occupied this position regardless of his calling in the Church, regardless of his standing in the community or the nation, before taking these responsible Church positions, has invoked the blessings of our heavenly Father upon him that he might be able

to speak under the inspiration of the Spirit. I realize as I stand before you this afternoon that I must depend upon the inspiration of my heavenly Father through his Son, Jesus Christ, for, to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ can be done not by the wisdom of men, but only by the power of God.

Much has been said here today and yesterday in these conference sessions regarding the missionary program of the Church. I would feel most ungrateful if I did not take just a moment to pay tribute to a great missionary who is absent from us today, but who was with us here six months ago occupying a seat on the row that I am privileged to occupy—Elder Stayner Richards.

He in very deed typified the true missionary spirit of the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I feel sure that he has touched the hearts of thousands in the British Isles or wherever he has labored to spread truth and righteousness, exercising his energy and talent in building up the kingdom of God.

So, I pay tribute to his memory today. It was my privilege to labor with him for about fourteen years in the Highland Stake, the stake in which I now reside.

Going back a few years, a prophet of God, Brigham Young, declared:

... there is neither man or woman in this Church who is not on a mission. That mission will last as long as they live, and it is to do good, to promote righteousness, to teach the principles of truth, and to prevail upon themselves and everybody around them to live those principles that they may obtain eternal life. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 1943 ed., p. 322.)

That is the true missionary spirit. That was the word of a prophet of God many years ago. The same teaching goes forth from this pulpit today: that each individual who has membership in this, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is on a mission, and that mission is to teach first, by example, and second, by precept, the truths of this gospel, which is the gospel of salvation and exaltation into the presence of our heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.

I thrill as I have the privilege of touring missions and visiting in the stakes and mingling with the stake missionary groups to catch the spirit of those who are specifically called to do missionary work.

As I toured the Western Canadian Mission just a few months ago, I heard many heartwarming missionary stories. One thrilling story I should like to share with you. I would like to take you with me for a moment or two to a concentration camp in France, in which are incarcerated two German prisoners, young men who never had become acquainted with each other until they were in this camp.

One of them was utilizing his time to study the word of the Lord that he might hold fast to the testimony which he had. This attracted the attention of the other German prisoner, who asked what he was so interested in. The reply came that he was reading *The Voice of Warning*. I am sure that rings a familiar note to many missionaries assembled today and who might be listening on television and the radio.

So, a gospel conversation ensued. Then this young man became interested, and many conversations thereafter followed. The war was over. They were released. The one returned to his locality in Germany, where he further investigated this thing he had heard in a French concentration camp. Then he applied for baptism. He was baptized, and after a few months was called by President Wunderlich to go on a mission for the Church. The young convert said, "I have only twelve marks," but President Wunderlich, because he had the priesthood of God, because he could speak with that power and authority which comes to those who are truly called to serve the Lord, made a promise to that young man if he would accept the call and respond to it that the Lord would provide a way.

So the young man, in blind faith, believing, as we have heard from this pulpit today, accepted the call and filled his mission. It was my privilege to interview him while he was doing stake missionary work in the city of Edmonton, Canada. He had migrated from Germany and is now living in Canada.

We all have a zone of influence, my brothers and sisters. I should like to ask the question here today, "When did you last have a gospel conversation with someone who does not claim membership in the Church?"

Well, you do not have to answer it, only in your own minds. I humbly pray that the Spirit of the Lord will take hold of us, that we will exercise our rightful influence to teach the principles of salvation and exaltation to our heavenly Father's children.

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I thrill as I see someone here in the audience today who is not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. After having filled a mission in the Southern States for this great Church before the turn of the century, he decided he wanted to follow further his education in electrical engineering, so he selected that great University of Cornell. One Sunday each student was to have the opportunity and privilege of filing past the rostrum and shaking hands with the first president of Cornell, Andrew White, introducing himself and making known where he was from. When it came this young man's turn, he said, "Thomas E. Yates from Scipio, Utah." Immediately Andrew White said, "Are you a Mormon?"

Brother Yates did not flinch because he was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said, "Yes, sir, I am."

Then Andrew White asked for an interview the following Sunday. Brother Yates said that week seemed mighty long because he realized the persecution that had been sustained by the missionaries, even while he was in the Southern States.

But the time passed, and he was ushered into the study of Andrew White. There it was revealed to him just why he had been invited for this interview.

Andrew White told him, on one occasion while he was a special representative to the Russian government he had become very friendly with Count Leo Tolstoi, the great Russian philanthropist and writer. On one occasion as he called at the home of Tolstoi he was told by the servant that Tolstoi was out in the fields plowing, and if he wanted to see him he would have to go there, which he did.

As he met Tolstoi there was the usual friendly salutation, and then Tolstoi said, "If you want to converse with me, you will have to come along while I finish my plowing."

This he did, and they conversed about many things. After a discussion on religion Tolstoi said to Andrew White, "But what about your American religion?"

Andrew White said, "We do not have a state church in America. People are allowed to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience."

Tolstoi said, "I know all that. I know that the Catholic Church originated in Rome. I know that the Lutheran Church originated in Germany, that the Episcopal Church originated in England, but I want to know something about your American religion, commonly called the Mormon Church."

Andrew White said, "I'll have to admit that I know very little about the Mormon people, other than that they are a superstitious people and that they are peculiar."

Then Tolstoi decided he would give Andrew White, great as he was, a rebuke, and so as not to lose the significance of this rebuke, I should like to read it to you.

"Then Count Leo Tolstoi, in his honest and stern but lovable manner, rebuked the ambassador: 'Dr. White, I am greatly surprised and disappointed that a man of your great learning and position should be so ignorant on this important subject. The Mormon people teach the American religion: their principles teach the people not only of heaven and its attendant glories, but how to live so that their social and economic relations with each other are placed on a sound basis. If the people follow the teachings of this Church—nothing can stop their progress—it will be limitless.

"There have been great movements started in the past, but they have died or been modified before they reached maturity. If Mormonism is able to endure, unmodified, until it reaches the third and fourth generations, it is destined to become the greatest power the world has ever known."

I believe that, as I stand before you today and testify that this thing called Mormonism has continued down through the stream of time for 123 years, unchanged, unmodified, and that it is the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yes, blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and brothers and sisters, I believe that men are thirsting and hungering for righteousness in the world today.

It is our great responsibility, as has been outlined here, to be the humble servants in the hands of the Lord in carrying this glorious message to those individuals.

May God bless us with this vision, and the spirit of missionary work, as I

bear witness that these things are true, in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

ELDER DELBERT L. STAPLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

IN ALL humility, my brothers and sisters, I approach this solemn and sacred responsibility this afternoon. I feel my dependence upon the Lord for his blessings and strength as I speak to you.

When a scientist makes a great discovery, it is not long before some other scientist makes the same discovery. The Lord has released that knowledge in the earth. It is not confined to one or two but to all who search for it. As the brethren of the General Authorities seek the Spirit for inspiration in the preparation of conference talks, and drawing from the same Spirit, there is a constant theme through the talks of each, for the Spirit has influenced them in that direction.

Recently in the solemn assembly held in the Logan Temple, President David O. McKay said, "The Lord is impressing his servants to extend and intensify the work of his Church."

Stake presidents and bishops, presidents of priesthood quorums, presidents and superintendents of auxiliaries know this statement to be true. There has been increased activity among the Aaronic Priesthood, the senior members of that priesthood, the girls' program, the Relief Society as it works with inactive women, the missionary program now at home as well as abroad, the great welfare program of the Church, and many other activities designed to

build faith and testimonies in the hearts of Latter-day Saints.

The tempo and the good feeling of this upsurge in activity and devotion must inspire and find expression in the lives of all Church members, not just alone in its leaders. As leaders it seems to me necessary that we let information go on down to the rank and file of our Church membership in order that they might have and enjoy the same counsel and direction that we receive. Where this condition is true, and our people understand, it wipes out any prejudice, resentment, or rebellion that might be in their hearts, and also they will support and work diligently for the accomplishment of the Lord's great purposes in the earth.

The Lord has not chosen us to fail in this work of his kingdom, but to succeed. We have no reason to fail. This is the Lord's work. He is inspiring and revealing unto those who have been properly called his mind and his will. This guiding force is present in the affairs of his kingdom today. Without this holy influence we would be groping in spiritual darkness.

In all ages of the world, the divinely appointed servants of God have entreated the people to love the Lord and to keep his commandments. Today is no exception in that respect. We are called to be a light to the world. The Lord has appointed us to be that light