

knowledge of the attributes of God. I think there are even more who have a correct idea of his character and of his perfections. And I am sure that nearly all, perhaps all in the Church, believe in him as the personal Being who actually lives. But the place where we fall down in acquiring faith, faith unto life and salvation, is in that we do not order our lives in such a way that we have the assurance that our conduct is in harmony with the divine will.

Faith comes by righteousness, and without righteousness and obedience we cannot have the measure of faith that will save us.

Now the test whereby it may be known whether we do have faith is very simple. It is the eternal truth proclaimed by the Lord when he said: "And these signs shall follow them that believe." (Mark 16:17.) If we have faith, there will be signs. If there are no signs, there is no faith. Where there is faith, there will be the gifts of the Spirit; there will be the ministering of angels and the working of miracles. Where there is faith, there will be apostles and prophets; there will be the authority of the priesthood; there will be the knowledge of God and the organization of the kingdom of God on earth.

Now, I suggest to you that faith is the great foundation upon which we must build: faith in God, faith in

Christ, faith in the restored truth and in the living oracles who direct the kingdom under the Lord in our day.

By faith all things can be done. There is nothing too hard for the Lord, and if we have faith, we can do whatever is requisite, according to his mind and will. By faith the worlds were made; by faith the elements can be controlled, rivers turned out of their courses, mountains removed. By faith we can have angels minister to us, see our sick healed, and the dead raised; and what is more important than all this, by faith we can live so as to become the sons of God and be joint heirs with Jesus Christ, entitled to receive and inherit and possess, as he has done before, the fulness of the kingdom of the Father.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, has just concluded speaking. The Choir and Congregation will now sing, "Redeemer of Israel," conducted by J. Spencer Cornwall, following which we will hear Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel."

ELDER ELRAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I REMEMBER that we used to come in from the mission field, and somehow we gave a ten minute talk each time the conference convened, and for three times in succession, somehow, I was in this position—the very last speaker before the summary remarks of President Grant. On one occasion I felt to say this: that I had never had a headache to speak of, I had never had a pain, I had never been to the hospital, but I knew what it meant to suffer. I have

experienced that, to a degree, during the past three days.

I think in all my experience in temple work, where four thousand couples knelt before the altar at which I officiated, the most thrilling thing was to have the parents, the brothers and sisters, and the in-laws, in addition to the friends assembled in the temple on the day of the marriage of their loved ones who had achieved so much in the early years of their lives and had prepared and

Sunday, October 4

Third Day

qualified themselves to come into the house of the Lord, and there receive their great and eternal blessings. It seems to me that if we intend to be together as families and associate as such in the life to come, that it is necessary for us to get a little experience in being together while here on earth. I was glad to hear Brother Benson speak of family recreational activities, but I think that the most fitting place for families to gather is in the temples of our Lord. If they will do so, often enough, it will help to keep them in line of duty and in a spiritual frame of mind and attitude which is conducive to successful living.

It was always pleasing, I say, to have the parents come to the temple with their children. And now, as I have visited stakes and missions, I have been greatly satisfied in my heart and made to rejoice because many of these same young couples have come to me and with happiness written on their faces, saying: "Do you remember us? We were married in the temple. These are our children. Aren't they wonderful?" Such an experience has been mine in every stake where I have yet gone as well as in every mission that I have visited. To have those young people, after having gone to the temple, living now as they should and active in the Church, even though they may be attending some university far away from home, come and make a sort of report that they are doing well, that they are active and that they are living the gospel and doing all the things they were asked to do in the temple, has been satisfying, indeed, to me.

The picture of these young couples expressing their joy and happiness in their associations and in their anticipation of eternal joy can be contrasted with one case that came to my attention. A young woman of our Church wrote me a letter asking for advice. She said, "I was born in the Church, but I fell in love with a fine young man who did not belong to our Church. We decided finally that we would marry. As

we talked it over, we decided that even though our religious beliefs were entirely different, neither of us would impose our beliefs or practices upon the other, that we would leave each other free to worship and to believe as each saw fit." She said, "This went along all right until our baby came. When I wanted to have it blessed in our Church, or branch (she was in a far-away city at the time), my husband objected, and he had the support of his mother and others who insisted that our child be christened in their church. My heart is broken." She ended her letter with this question, "What would you suggest?"

Well, I was dumbfounded to know what to suggest at that point in her experience, my brothers and sisters. I thought, surely somewhere along the line some of us had failed to suggest and to advise and to counsel this young woman long before she got into this situation. She, like others in like circumstances, had thought that everything could be "worked out later."

What I shall say today is said with a hope that others may avoid getting into such a difficult situation in this very important event in their lives—that of choosing a companion in marriage. How will this young woman now obtain the blessings that are promised to the faithful children of God? How will she obtain her eternal blessings? How will she be assured the association of her husband and of her children and of others that are dear and close to her?

Parents, bishoprics, and all agencies in the Church, and officers and teachers in the various classrooms are responsible to see that boys and girls do not get so far away from us that they marry out of the Church. Even though there are fine, wholesome, wonderful people outside the Church, nevertheless, when we engage in marriage with them our divine destiny is imperiled!

To preserve the family relationship here and hereafter is one of the great and important purposes of life and of

the gospel. That such relationships and associations hereafter should be possible, is consistent with reason. All righteous parents, all righteous people have a natural, inborn desire to associate forever with those whom they love, but it is consistent also, my brothers and sisters, to believe that we must conform to the laws of God which make such associations possible! This is clearly stated in the revelations that have come to us in this day. I read from the 131st Section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

And that is what we are speaking of:

And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase. (D. & C. 131:1-4.)

Death does not separate husbands and wives who are united by the power of our Father in heaven in his holy temples. It does not take the children from the parents because these children are born under the covenant and the parents have a right and a claim on them in the life hereafter.

President Brigham Young made this very clear when he said:

"When a man and a woman have received their endowments and sealings, and then had children born unto them afterwards, those children are legal heirs to the kingdom, and to all its blessings and promises, and they are the only ones that are on this earth." (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 195.)

Yet, I have heard persons say to me, surely, a just God would not want marriage to terminate with this life, and I have agreed with them. The Lord does not want that to be. That is why he has instituted this principle of eternal marriage and has given to man here upon the earth the power, the authority, and the keys to seal upon the earth

and have it sealed and ratified in the heavens. (See D. & C. 132:3-8.)

Yes, he is a God of order, not of confusion. He has said that all who would have a blessing at his hands must obey the law upon which that blessing is predicated, and so all of us who would have the association, one with the other hereafter, must receive it through the obedience to the law which makes it possible.

My, what disappointment, what regret, what remorse will be felt by those of us who should, because of neglect or indifference, fail or refuse to enter into the marriage covenant according to the way God has designed it! To refuse to enter into such a covenant would end with this life, the associations as husband and wife.

If, after we have received our endowments in the temple and have entered into the covenant of marriage, we refuse to do what the Lord has prescribed that we do, live according to his laws and "abide in my covenant," as he says, if we fail to do that, then we are in danger of losing the blessings which are promised and which can be realized only upon our faithfulness.

Now, in contrast to the remorse that will come to those who see their mistakes too late, what joy and what happiness await those who come forth in the "resurrection of the just" to find their companions by their side, their children, and their grandchildren perhaps, all of them having qualified while on earth for the greatest of all the gifts of God—eternal life and exaltation in the kingdom of God.

When we think that this greatest of all gifts, this power to have eternal happiness and joy and association with those we love most, is possible for all of us, how foolish, how frail, and how unwise we are if we pass by the opportunity to make these ties binding in the next life.

By example and by precept, parents should show the importance of the temple and of temple work. I have always felt that it is well for children to ob-

Sunday, October 4

Third Day

serve their parents hustling about getting ready to go to the temple, to do work for the dead; to see them preparing their temple clothing; to note that emphasis is given to genealogical research and temple work. I think that is all conducive to good. Children then will inquire of their parents why this is so important and the parents then have the opportunity to explain these grand and glorious principles in terms that are understandable to their children. With such help children will have a desire to go themselves to the temple.

Now, the Doctrine and Covenants is replete with the word of the Lord, saying that the obligations and covenants that we enter into for this life that are not sanctioned and entered into by the laws of God, end with this life. But it is equally plain when it states that those who do enter into covenants of marriage and sealings in the temples of the Lord shall pass by the angels and the gods and the sentinels and go on to their exaltations and have glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of their seeds forever, and that such a marriage will be in full force when they are out of this world.

Oh, how I wish we could teach that to the people of the world, and especially to our own people, so they may

not lose the glorious blessing and associations promised to the faithful children of God.

God bless us, my brothers and sisters, that as parents we may teach our children early in life to walk uprightly before the Lord and help them to understand these principles before it is too late.

I pray that we may do this, in wisdom and in love, and in kindness, and prepare them and point them toward the temple and temple marriage as soon as they are able to understand what we say. I testify that this work is true, that the power to seal is upon the earth, and that these men who sit before us here have the keys and the authority to act in the name of God and seal upon the earth and have it ratified in the heavens. Thus I testify because I know it is so. I do it humbly, and in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just heard Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve. Elder Evans, whom you know and have known because of his work on the radio and his service in the stakes, and whom the entire nation knows,—Richard L. Evans,—will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of the Seventy.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I PRAY that I may be given utterance in that which I should briefly say.

I have frequented these beloved walls for a period now approaching a quarter century in many situations and assignments. But this is the most difficult thing that I have here had to do. It seems that this chapter was not in the script which I had written for myself.

In the brief, but in some respects too long a time since first I became aware

of this possibility, I have measured the full measure of my life many times over. There are those here who know much better than I the weight of this work. There is none here who knows better than I my own limitations, inadequacies, and imperfections, and the feeling of smallness which I have. But if you and my Father in heaven will accept me as I am, with your help and his, I shall earnestly endeavor to be better than I am or have ever been.