

Sunday, October 3

Third Day

L. Wirthlin and Elder Adam S. Bennion. Sister Bennion is here, and Brother Bennion is listening in.

These services and the services this afternoon will be broadcast in the Assembly Hall and Barratt Hall over a public address system and by television. We have announced the services heretofore of 15 radio stations in Utah, California, Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Colorado, and Arizona, and by special arrangement over 10 television stations in Utah, Washington, Colorado, Oregon, California, and Arizona. What a mighty congregation assembled this morning to worship the Lord, and to participate in this great semi-annual Conference. It is overwhelming. We are indeed grateful for those who are cooperating.

We note in the audience members of the U.S. Congress, representatives of our State institutions of learning, of the Junior Colleges, Seminary teachers, the Secretary of State, the Mayor, to all of whom we express a cordial welcome. We appreciate the spirit of harmony and the desire to cooperate in the effort to uplift humanity, and to establish truth.

We have with us the Secretary of Agriculture, Brother Benson, as you know, our United States Senator, Wallace F. Bennett, members of the House of Representatives, and others, Mr. Dawson, Douglas R. Stringfellow, Lamont Toronto, Superintendent Bateman and Dr. Lynn Bennion, President Olpin, President Dixon, President Miller

of the Weber College, and others undoubtedly whom I have not seen.

We have also our stake presidents, their counselors, and bishops.

The Choir singing for this morning session of the Conference will be by the Tabernacle Choir, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting, and Frank W. Asper at the organ.

We shall begin these services by the Choir and Congregation singing, "High On The Mountain Top," Brother Cornwall conducting.

The opening prayer will be offered by Elder Edward L. Clissold, president of the Oahu Stake, and formerly president of the Japanese Hawaiian Mission.

We shall now join with the Choir.

The congregation joined with the Choir in singing the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top."

Elder Edward L. Clissold, President of the Oahu Stake, offered the invocation.

President David O. McKay:

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Jesu, Jesu, Holy, Holy, Yet Most Lowly," conducted by Elder J. Spencer Cornwall.

Following the Choir singing we shall hear from President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency. He will be followed by Elder George Q. Morris.

Singing by the Choir, "Jesu, Jesu, Holy, Holy."

PRESIDENT STEPHEN L RICHARDS

First Counselor in the First Presidency

MY DEAR brethren and sisters, I propose on this occasion to present for the attention of members of the Church, and other friends who listen to our proceedings, some features of our missionary system. I shall not give statistical items. They appear in our publications from time to time. My concern is that our missionary efforts may be more thoroughly understood and appreciated by all people.

I recognize that I cannot hope to give an adequate understanding of this great

activity in the Church without the Spirit of our Lord which underlies it, and I therefore solicit the aid of your faith and prayers in presenting it, and the direction of our Father.

I mention first a rather pronounced tendency in recent years to emphasize the value of the teaching process in the proclamation of the gospel. I do not mean to infer that our missionaries have not always sought to teach through their preaching. As teaching concerns itself largely with the impartation of

knowledge, so of course all good preaching embraces teaching. The tendency of which I speak is directed more particularly to the organization and planning of our gospel teaching in missionary work. I feel that there is ample warrant for this planned teaching of the gospel to investigators.

The Savior commanded his disciples, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20.)

Teaching with testimony is the epitome of missionary effort.

If you will bear with me, I will review for you briefly some of the major items included within the planned or standardized program used by the missionaries as they contact the good men and women all over the world who will listen to their message. Here is the outline of their gospel teaching, usually presented to their listeners in family groups in the homes of the people in what are called "cottage meetings."

First, the Godhead. The missionary calls attention to the necessity of a correct understanding of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, his personality and attributes, to the extent that it is possible for men to have understanding of Deity. Nearly all investigators readily assent that such an understanding is important and highly desirable in all religious considerations.

The missionary then reviews the concepts and teachings of the various denominational churches on this subject, and then brings forward, with the cooperation of the investigator through references pointed out in his own Bible, the support which the scriptures offer for the personality of Deity as opposed to his being merely an essence or spirit pervading the universe. To anyone believing the Bible, the composition of the Godhead with three distinct personalities is made clear, and then the missionary, with conviction and testimony, gives to the investigator the substantiating experience of the Prophet Joseph Smith, in which he beheld both the Father and the Son, felt and experienced the glory of their presence, looked upon

their forms and countenances, and heard with his ears the sweet, comforting, exalting resonance of their voices.

What an abiding satisfaction to the searcher for truth is this first lesson and testimony of the missionary! Confusion with reference to this all-important theological principle is resolved, and the way is opened for further understanding of the whole province of religion, embracing as it does man's relationship to Deity, his origin, his purpose in earth life, and his ultimate destiny.

Next, the missionary presents to his investigating group a lesson on the apostasy. He reviews the Primitive Church set up by the Savior himself, and the essential features which the Lord prescribed for his authentic work of salvation to go forward. He has little difficulty in winning assent from his listeners that if men and churches depart from the essentials which the Savior established, they are not in a position to represent him authentically, and that the ordinances lack validity if not administered by his delegated authority.

After considering the many variations and departures from the essential features of the Lord's Primitive Church, it is not difficult for the investigator to understand why a restoration was necessary, with a new delegation of power and authority to set up the Lord's work and administer the ordinances of the gospel.

Then again follows the earnest, sincere testimony of the missionary as to the experiences of the Prophet Joseph and his fellow laborer, which manifestations of divine power serve not only to corroborate the apostasy, but also to substantiate beyond question the necessity for and the actuality of the restoration, and so the restoration is the next lesson, with its new commission to hold and exercise the Holy Priesthood with an interpretation of that divine power, which in my thinking has never been equaled in any writing, sacred or otherwise.

It is said that the most beautiful words in the English language are those of the Savior when in his Sermon on the Mount, he answered his own question:

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"And why take ye thought for raiment?" with these matchless phrases:

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

"And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (*Ibid.*, 6:28-29.)

I compare with the words of the Savior those used in the revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, concerning the Holy Priesthood restored to man after the long apostasy from the true concept of that priesthood as the Lord exercised it and delegated it to his Apostles. Here are the words which I put in the same class with those of the Savior. They define the nature of the priesthood and the manner of its exercise, and they came from the Savior:

"Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dew from heaven." (D. & C. 121:45.)

The next lesson presents the Book of Mormon and its place in the establishment of our Father's work among his children. The investigator readily agrees that our Father in heaven, who is a just God, is no respecter of persons, and that all of his children the world over are the beneficiaries of his mercy and his plans for their salvation. The scriptural predictions concerning the coming forth of this sacred volume of scripture are presented to the investigator. He is reminded of the prehistoric peoples who dwelt in the lands of the Americas and the demands of justice in bringing them the message of the Savior.

The investigator is particularly reminded of the injunction set forth in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 37:15-20) that two sticks, meaning books, should be prepared, one for the house of Judah, and one for the house of Joseph, and that the Book of Mormon fills the requirement for the latter assignment. He is also reminded of the Savior's reference to his "other sheep," not of the Jews, whom he must visit, and that the Book of Mormon sets forth the fulfillment of the Lord's obligation to his "other sheep."

Understanding is given by the missionary of the great purposes served by the Book of Mormon in bringing to the world the history of the early inhabitants of the western continents, the experiences of their nations in dealing with the great political, moral, and religious problems of their day, and more particularly in presenting in even more clarity than they are to be found in the Jewish scriptures, the word of God and the principles of the holy gospel.

The investigator is made aware, sometimes with surprise to him, that the Book of Mormon is in no sense antagonistic to the scriptures of the Holy Bible, but it is rather a companion book containing revelations of the prophets, and an account of the administration of the Savior's work among his "other sheep," being in essence a new and additional witness to the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The experience of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his associates in the discovery and production of this book, recited under the convincing testimonies of the missionaries, seldom fails to bring to the investigator a new understanding and respect for this sacred book, this mighty messenger of Jesus Christ to all mankind.

With this background of understanding given by the missionary to the investigator regarding the true nature of Deity, the establishment of the Lord's true Church and kingdom in the earth through his Beloved Son in the Meridian of Time, the falling away from the true worship of the Christ, the withdrawal of his authority, its subsequent restoration, and the setting up of his kingdom in the latter dispensation, with a new volume of scripture as an additional testimony of the Lord's divinity and a necessary and invaluable expansion of man's knowledge concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ, the investigator is now prepared for the teaching of the principles of the gospel and the eternal plan of salvation as they affect the individual lives of all men.

Very often the investigator receives a new and satisfying understanding of the fall of man and the atonement of the Savior. He is brought to appreciate the difference between the immortality of the soul and the life hereafter vouchsafed to all men, good or bad, through the intercession of Jesus Christ, our Lord,

on the one hand, and on the other individual salvation and exaltation made possible through obedience to the principles of the gospel and the commandments of God.

He is taught the real meaning and application of faith and repentance, and the necessity for baptism by the authorized servants of the Lord, for admission into his kingdom. He is taught the province of the Holy Ghost. He learns of the revelations and statements of the prophets regarding heavenly things which may be known only through our Father's revelations to man. He learns of the pre-existence, before earth life, of the Christ, our Elder Brother, the Firstborn of the Father.

He learns of his pre-determined mission and the terms upon which he was to perform it, and then he comes to understand that man also had a pre-mortal existence, that his spirit is the spirit-child of the Father, and that the purpose of earth life is to give that eternal spirit an opportunity for development and growth and probation in mortality. He learns that the body in which the spirit is tabernacled is in verity a "temple of God," and that it cannot be violated without affront to the Father whose spirit-child dwells within it.

He is made, perhaps for the first time, to appreciate the real significance of clean living. He is taught the principle of free agency, with power vested within himself to determine the course of his life, but he is also taught that the abuse of his God-given liberty will bring reproach and degradation to him.

In this new teaching of God's plans for his children he is given matchless incentive for the development of noble character and high service to his fellow man. He is taught that the revelations set forth with certainty the stations to which men of ambition and ideals may aspire; that there are preferential conditions and places in the hereafter as in this life; and that the reward to the truly faithful will be placement in the highest degree of glory in the presence of the Father and the Son, there to dwell forever in an eternity of progression in knowledge, power, and goodness.

Now, after these teachings and their assimilation by the investigator he is

prepared for the call to repentance. He is prepared to review and appraise his life in light of the knowledge he has received. Perhaps never before in his experience has he thought seriously of the need for repentance. Now he knows that all men are called to repentance, not once only, but all during the course of their lives, that as they gain knowledge of the principles and laws of the perfect life, they have need to turn away from frailty, weakness, and imperfection.

He becomes more keenly conscious of the commandments the Lord has given, of their transcendent importance not only to himself, but to the great society of men everywhere. He begins to realize the real significance of God's kingdom in the earth, and in the hearts of men. When he understands the paternity of man, his appreciation of the fraternity and brotherhood of man is enhanced.

And so there arises within the heart of the investigator so led and instructed in the principles of truth a desire—a fervent, burning desire—to avail himself of the high privileges extended to him to ally himself with the kingdom of our Lord. He wishes for the kind of conviction and testimony he has heard and experienced from the missionary.

He sees the happiness, the contentment, and the satisfaction which flow from such testimony. He has been taught, and he now knows that this great happiness may come to him only through humble prayer and study, so he acquires the philosophy of humility. He no longer regards himself as self-sufficient. He depends on the Lord, and his faith assures him his trust will be rewarded.

Of course I have not set forth the experience of every investigator, nor every missionary, in this outline of our procedures. I set forth the opportunities of the plan, and I am pleased to state to you that thousands of truth-loving individuals have been the beneficiaries of it.

There is a feature of this missionary teaching not confined to any one lesson, but running throughout the entire program, which deserves special mention. It is the constant emphasis on the principle that it is the duty and the obligation of all men to seek and know the truth.

"And ye shall know the truth, and

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the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.)

"And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;

"The Spirit of truth is of God." (D. & C. 93:24, 26.)

Men not only have the privilege, they have also the obligation to study and know the truth. All will come to judgment. The truth is God's law by which all will be judged. They who have the truth have a solemn duty to share it with others. Our missionaries sincerely feel this obligation. They are sensitive to the proprieties involved in visiting the homes of the people. They enter only upon invitation, but they diligently seek opportunities to give their message of truth. I am sure there would be fewer rebuffs, and there are not very many, if their altruistic and generous attitude were more fully understood.

If I but had a way of sending a message to the homes the missionaries visit and the people they contact in their labors, I would appeal to them—all of them—to listen with an open mind, and with a measure of patience. I can assure any who will, that preconceived prejudices will disappear, and appreciation and gratitude will arise for the unselfish, friendly service of these ambassadors of truth.

There is a phase of this teaching process in the missionary effort for which I am extremely grateful. It is this. In this cottage meeting method of teaching the gospel to families and individuals we do not have to have a great body of trained and polished speakers to transmit our message to large congregations. I think generally our missionaries acquit themselves well before audiences, but in this family teaching what they need most is, first, a knowledge of the principles, and secondly, testimony as to their divine origin.

Our missionaries generally work with individuals in an individual capacity. Conversion is an individual matter. There is no such thing as a mass conversion. Many people may have yielded to the impressions of the spirit at one time, but the experience of each is a personal matter between him and his Lord, so I feel that the Lord approves of the individual teaching of the gospel

such as we are carrying forward in the missionary service.

Another thing for which I am likewise grateful is that there is substantially no variance or uncertainty in our missionary teaching. It is not necessary that there be long debates or discussions as to interpretations of doctrine. What we teach is the revelations which, for the most part are direct, certain, and unequivocal in their import. If any mysteries seem to arise, we leave the solution of such mysteries for future revelation. The Lord has given us sufficient for this day and time, and for the people who live in the world.

When I read of the discussions, debates, and sometimes controversies, arising among religious leaders and learned men as to the problems and programs for Christian churches, I assure you I am profoundly grateful to be identified with a lofty cause, whose course is so fully and accurately and permanently charted that all you have to do to know the way and perceive the light is to ask and discover what the revelations say and what the priesthood directs. It seems to me that all that should be necessary to guide the course of any Christian cause is a simple declaration of the divine nature of the Christ and his supremacy in the world as the author of divine law which governs in the affairs of men.

So, my brethren and sisters, we send out from the body of the Church not so many as we would like, or as we need, but nevertheless a great army of young men and young women, and some older people, to teach honest people in the world of the re-establishment of our Father's kingdom, and the vital principles of life which have come to us with the revelations of the restored gospel.

We also call to assist these missionaries considerable numbers of those residing in the missions who are willing to devote all or a part of their time to the missionary effort. What wonderful people these missionaries are—unselfish, sincerely interested in their fellows, humble, prayerful, studious, giving their all to their Father in heaven and the promotion of his great cause in the world.

And you, my fellow members of the

Church, make their achievements possible. Your homes contribute to the support of the young men and young women, and many older ones, who, with some assistance from the quorums, pursue their labors. These missionaries are constantly in our thoughts. We pray for them, and we bless them, and we have ample proof that the Lord blesses them, recognizes and rewards their service. No inconsiderable part of our time and effort is devoted to the missionary work of the Church.

We are ever seeking ways to improve, and we are pleased today to recognize this organized teaching of the gospel which I have outlined for you as a distinct contribution to the efficacy of missionary effort. Further improvements will undoubtedly come, and the Lord will fulfil his mighty predictions, "For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated." (D. & C. 1:2.)

There is something else that perhaps all of us can do for the missionaries and the great cause they represent. With the mention of it I shall close. Everyone of us as it were furnishes a background for the missionaries' work. If we live and serve so that the missionary in his teaching can point with pride to the application of the gospel principles in our society, we shall be of infinite help in the process of conversion.

The consistency of our living will make an invaluable contribution. The

influence of our living will spread far and wide, and will furnish eloquent and effective testimony to the principles we proclaim. By courageously living honorable, righteous lives we are all entitled to be counted members of the incomparable missionary force of the Church of Christ.

For myself, I pray for strength to be a consistent contributor and supporter of the cause which I dearly love. I offer the same prayer for you, my brethren and my sisters. The Lord help us to be exemplars and teachers of the truth which we have. I know we have it. The Lord help us to share it with our fellow men, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency has just spoken to us. This telegram has just come from Bakersfield First Ward, California:

"Brethren, we thank you for the privilege of enjoying Conference with you on television. Sincerely."

What a great blessing, what wonderful inventions are the radio and television when properly used for noble purposes.

This, for example, makes us sense clearly that tens of thousands are sitting with us this morning in worship.

Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Clifford E. Young.

ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY DEAR brethren and sisters: I thank the Lord for the privilege of being with you this morning and of having fellowship with you in the Church of Jesus Christ, and I thank the Lord for the instructions, the simple, beautiful, convincing gospel instructions that we have received this morning and in all preceding sessions of this conference.

I am wholly dependent upon my Father in heaven and upon your as-

sistance in that he shall lead me to say the things that I should say upon this occasion.

This Church for a century and a quarter has been declaring these truths to the world. The testimonies we have heard, the teachings of the gospel, the purposes of the Lord, have been preached to the world during all this period by men who have been called of God to do so, and the message to the world is and has been that the