

Campbellite, or a Catholic, or an Episcopalian, or Mohometan, or even pagan, or anything else, if he will bow the knee, and with his tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, and will support good and wholesome laws for the regulation of society, we hail him as a brother, and will stand by him while he stands by us in these things; for every man's religious faith is a matter between his own soul and his God alone. . . .

We ask no pre-eminence; we want no pre-eminence; but where God has placed us, there we will stand; and that is, to be one with our brethren, and our brethren are those that keep the commandments of God, and do the will of our Father who is in heaven; and by them we will stand, and with them we will dwell in time and in eternity. (*Journal History*, Dec. 23, 1847.)

How nobly did the Prophet Joseph Smith declare this ideal when he said:

We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may. (Eleventh Article of Faith.)

It is to be remembered that there are men walking the earth and beckoning us to follow them to the future—not abreast of us, but ahead of us. Religion explains them as men blessed of heaven; men so spiritually endowed as to be able to respond to the inspiration of the infinite, which they know comes from God. They are good men, and wonderful is the vitality of goodness. Men are keeping faith and virtue and are working for the freedom and happiness of the human race. Their discipline is the loyalty of each man's heart to the voice of God. These men look for authority, for principles, for divine government. They have noble thoughts, beautiful sentiments, worthy aspirations, courageous living for a true and happier life. They know that God has not separated himself from the world nor does he lightly regard anyone's need. There is a true light which "lighteth

every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9), a saying rich in promise. God reveals his principles of eternal life to good men who have discerning vision and deep faith. The world has always had such men; it has such men today.

In all of our history there has been nothing in the way of persecution by the Latter-day Saints of other people, but we have been taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith from the beginning, when God spoke to him, that all are children of God and that we should approach them with love and the testimony that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer of the world.

Someday, he will be found again among the thirsting people for whom he lived and died. As he came back after his death to confirm the faith of his disciples, and to comfort their desolate hearts, so will he come again to establish his kingdom in the earth and usher in the reign of peace. May we be blessed with a love for mankind, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Levi Edgar Young, Senior President of the First Council of Seventy, has just spoken to us.

The congregation will now sing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," under the direction of Elder J. Spencer Cornwall.

After the singing, Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric will speak to us.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Marion D. Hanks.

BISHOP CARL W. BUEHNER

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

MY DEAR brethren and sisters, at this moment I am so nervous and excited I don't know whether my sermon has been delivered yet or not.

I have been deeply moved by the powerful discourses given during the course of this conference. I am grateful to be one of you. I have all but been lifted

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out of this world and made to feel very close to the other side, not only because of the experience I am having at this moment, but also because of the wonderful things that have been said and the Spirit by which they have been spoken.

Then I begin to feel that maybe we are not very far from the other side at any time, after all. Reference has been made to the spirits that come here every day to inhabit these little new bodies, these spirits, pure, sweet, innocent. They cannot speak to us. They cannot tell us of the great experience that they had in the sphere from which they just came, but every day they are coming here—messengers from the spirit world. Then they live here in this mortal life a few years, some a very short time, maybe a few hours, a few days, a few years, and for the best of us not too many years.

Then we leave this life. People every day leave this life, returning again to the presence of our Heavenly Father. They can speak. They can report. They can tell of our faithfulness and of how the work is progressing here in this life.

In the past few days I learned of a person whose remaining days in mortality have been measured out to him. They said he could only live one more week. Then I thought about others—those I have read about in the newspapers, some who, it has been said, could only live another month, or a few months, or some, perhaps a year. I began to wonder what I would do if someone said to me, "Your days are measured. You will only live here one more week, or one more month," realizing the great work there is to do and all that I might have done, all that I should have done, and now time is running out. What would I do?

I think, brethren and sisters, possibly the first thing I would do is try to make peace with everyone that I have learned to know, and I would do some fast repenting, even though it might not be very effective. It would be better to be in a repentant mood all the time.

I am sure time is measured for you, for me, and for all of us. Maybe not in so many days—perhaps we have not been told how many days we will yet

live upon this earth, but we certainly know of the great work that we must do while we are still here. Someone wrote these few lines that I thought were rather interesting:

Suppose you live to be seventy. How long is it? How many years of that span will really count? Allow for eight hours out of twenty-four in which you lie unconscious, asleep in bed. Subtract your kid days and your old age. Deduct the days when sickness puts you out of the game, and seventy years is not very long after all, is it? But it is all the time you've got. What are you going to do with it? Life is time. Kill time and you commit suicide. Footprints in the sands of time are not made by sitting down. When the Great Referee calls time, have something worth while to show.

I think our short life here in mortality is something like taking a journey. Many of you have taken a long journey to get here to conference, and you are going to take one to return to your homes. Many of us travel every week. We get road maps, we get books on travel, and we discover where we are going, but often as we travel down a highway, we come to an intersection that is not very well marked, and we do not know which way to turn. Often we get on a detour, and we travel an hour or two hours or three hours or a hundred miles or two hundred miles before we discover we are lost.

Then we have to turn around and come back. Have you ever discovered when you return to the point where you begin your detour that that time is lost? You cannot turn your watch back. You cannot turn time back. We have just lost two hours or four hours or two hundred miles of that journey, and it is gone forever.

I think sometimes some of us traveling this mortal life of ours are doing some detouring. We are not coming to our meetings as faithfully as we should. We are not keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father all the way. We are not doing all the things that the Lord has asked us to do—we are detouring, we are losing time, and that time can never be made up again. That time is lost.

I have learned, too, that while there are many roads that come to Salt Lake

City to bring you to general conference, according to the scriptures there are only two roads that we can travel as it pertains to our spiritual life. One is the broad road that leads to destruction and damnation—the other, the straight and narrow road that leads to life eternal.

Often I feel when we detour we get off the straight and narrow path, and we lose time. We actually waste time. We do not do the thing that the Lord expects us to do to inherit the great blessings that he has in store for us. Therefore, I would suggest to every member of the Church, that while we cannot change the length of time we live in mortality, we can change what we do with the time we have at our disposal. Keep the commandments. Be loyal to the leadership of the Church. Help build up the kingdom of our Heavenly Father. Pay your tithes. Pay your offerings.

Security comes from the paying of tithes! Everything we have belongs to the Lord. He said, "Return a tenth of your increase." For giving a tenth of it back he promises us great blessings—great blessings to return a tenth of what he has given us, and many have a difficult time understanding its importance.

Living in a world filled with evil and temptations, it is not always easy to do the things we know we should do. I wish to refer again to the spirits coming from the spirit world, inhabiting little mortal bodies to live a life under these conditions. I am particularly interested in one of these at this very moment, for I am expecting my thirteenth grandchild. It might be being born right at this moment. It might be this afternoon, and it might be in the days to follow. As I think of the journey this little spirit will travel in mortality, I think of the anxiety existing in the spirit world as they bid farewell to a spirit to come to this life. The mourning and sorrow and grief must be much greater than it is when one leaves this life returning to the other side.

I hope, brethren and sisters, we will all have a desire to make our trip a

round trip—from the presence of our Heavenly Father back again to the presence of our Heavenly Father. I must not take longer. In closing, I would like to relate a story that I have told a number of times, which some of you have heard before, but it has a point to it worth consideration.

It is about the golfer who went out on the golf course and placed his ball on a tee. He raised his club and drove the ball way down the fairway, and when he finally found it, it was in the center of a large anthill. He stepped up close to it, took another club out of his bag, and swung at the ball. He missed it and tore out about a third of the anthill. He stepped up a little closer. He raised his club and swung a second time. He missed the ball again and mutilated the anthill on the other side. By that time the remaining ants in the anthill became very much alarmed at what was happening to their homes, their relatives, their friends, and they called together their leaders very hurriedly for a solution. A moment later the leaders made this report: "If you want to be saved, you had better get on the ball."

Think it over, brethren and sisters. I think that would fit our lives in many ways. Think it over, and then conform your lives with the time that has been allotted to you. Stay on the straight and narrow pathway that leads us back again into the presence of our Heavenly Father to enjoy with him the great blessings of the righteous and the faithful.

That this may come to each and every one of us I pray sincerely and humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric. We shall now hear from Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy, who will be followed by Elder Delbert L. Stapley.