

Saturday, October 1

Second Day

verts, who have been brought into the Church by the teachings, by precept and by example—principally by example by the members of the Church who are also serving with them in the forces.

I met a number of young men who said, "We came in the Church because of the lives of these young men and because they taught us the principles of the gospel."

They are doing a good work. There might be one or two that may be careless, but those young men with whom I had the privilege of meeting, talking to, would bear their testimony of the truth and were walking humbly.

And as I met with the officers and chaplains (and unfortunately, at this time, we have no chaplain of the Church there), but when I met with them, universally they said, "We like your young men. They are clean. They are dependable."

One of these chaplains, when I was talking with him, said, "I keep two of these young men of your faith with me all the time. If I lose one of them, if he is called away, I get another." While I was talking with him, a young man came in with a message, and when he was in there, he held out his hand and said, "I am Brother so-and-so. (I do not remember his name now.)" He received the instruction given him and departed. A little later another one came. He likewise was a member of the Church. This man, not a member of the Church, said, "I keep them with me all the time because they are dependable."

Be proud of your boys. Be proud of your young men in the mission field. That is a good field, and those people

are entitled to hear the truth just as well as the people of Europe or of any other part of this world. These people who are living and laboring among them are happy. I saw none that was discontented.

The Spirit of the Lord is leading them. The doors are opening for them to preach the gospel.

Now just one more word that I would like to say. This comes a little close to me; nevertheless I want to say it. Sister Smith's singing everywhere we went was a great help. When she could not go to Korea, we took a record of "The King of Glory," and we were able to broadcast the recording from the military grounds so it could be heard all over the city; so her voice was heard there, although she was not privileged to accompany me.

It was a glorious visit. I think we accomplished some good.

Brother Heaton, a young man, full of energy and astonishingly full of knowledge, knows those people in the Far East and loves them, and he will be successful in his mission field.

The Lord bless you, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

That interesting report of the expansion of the Church in the Far East, a significant epoch in Church history, to which you have just listened, was given by President Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. We shall now hear Brother Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Marion D. Hanks.

#### ELDER STERLING W. SILL

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*



MUCH HAS BEEN said at this conference about the life and mission of the Master. I pray that what I may say will not detract from that which has already been said.

After that long awful night of betrayal and trial, Jesus was brought before Pilate. Pilate believed that Jesus

was innocent of any wrong and made a weak attempt to try and save his life by taking advantage of one of his privileges as Roman governor to release a prisoner to the Jews at the time of the Passover. Pilate had in his custody a noted insurrectionist and murderer by the name of Barabbas, and probably relying upon the sense of fairness of the Jews that certainly they would not

consent to the release of this notorious criminal and punish an innocent man, Pilate said, "Whom shall I release unto you—Barabbas or Jesus which is called Christ?" (See Matt. 27:21.) And Pilate must have been startled to hear them say, "Barabbas."

He said, "Then what shall I do with Jesus?" And the Jews replied, "Let him be crucified." Pilate said, "Shall I crucify your king?" And they said, "We have no king but Caesar."

Then Pilate took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, ". . . I am innocent of the blood of this just man: see ye to it." And the Jews said, ". . . His blood be upon us and on our children. Then Barabbas was released and Jesus was delivered to be crucified." (See Matt. 27:24-26.)

We might safely assume that both Pilate and the Jews felt that they had permanently settled any question which may have arisen in connection with the life of Christ—Pilate by merely washing his hands, and the Jews by putting to death the very Son of God.

But there is a peculiar relationship which exists between the life of Jesus Christ and every other soul born into the world. In that great period of our pre-existence, Jesus was appointed and ordained to be the Savior of the world and the Redeemer of men, and there is no other name given by which man can be saved. What Pilate and the Jews did to Jesus did not alter that relationship in the slightest degree, either for them or for us. For Jesus also bore our sins, and we are therefore party to his suffering and his atonement.

In our lives we are forced to make many decisions. By our answers to life's questions, we determine our own destiny. James Russell Lowell wrote some significant lines entitled, "The Present Crisis." He says—

Once to every man and nation  
Comes a moment to decide  
In the strife of truth and falsehood  
For the good or evil side.

Some great cause, God's new Messiah  
Offering each the bloom or blight  
Parts the goats upon the left hand  
And the sheep upon the right.

And the choice goes on forever  
'Twixt the darkness and the light.

Certainly the greatest question to be decided by any man during his lifetime is the one suggested by Pilate, "What shall I do with Jesus?" The Jews made their decision. They said, "His blood be upon us and on our children," and so it has been. And so it may be with us because the question is still before us, and each must answer for himself.

For Jesus is standing on trial still.  
You may be false to him if you will.  
Or you may serve him through good or ill.  
What will you do with Jesus?

You may evade him as Pilate tried  
Or you may serve him whate'er betide.  
Vainly you'll struggle from him to hide  
What will you do with Jesus?

What will you do with Jesus?  
Neutral you cannot be,  
And someday your soul may be asking—  
What will he do with me?

One of the best methods for solving a problem is to weigh carefully each of the alternatives. In this case there seem to be three. The first is that we may follow the example of the Jews and reject him and thereby, as Paul says, we crucify unto ourselves the Son of God afresh. Such a course is unthinkable. But much of what the Jews did, they did in ignorance. Upon the cross Jesus said, ". . . Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.) The Jews didn't really understand what they were doing when they put to death the Savior of the world. Pilate didn't know that this young peasant carpenter standing before him was in very deed the great Jehovah who had created the earth.

But we might ask ourselves this question. Why didn't they know? There is probably only one answer: They lacked the honest effort, earnest inquiry, and humble prayer necessary to find the truth. But in large measure, we make exactly the same mistakes. When we absent ourselves from sacrament meeting, we don't really understand what we are doing. When we fail to pay our tithing or when we are married "until death do us part," we know not what we do. It is our ignorance as well as our sins that stands between us and our salvation.

If the Jews suffered so great a penalty

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for their sins committed largely in ignorance, what about us? We have all of the information that the Jews had, but in addition we have the judgment of time shining upon the life of Christ. We have the testimony of the apostles bearing witness to his divinity and sealing their testimony with their blood.

But in addition, a great flood of new knowledge has come into the world. In the early spring of 1820, God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ reappeared upon the earth to re-establish among men a belief in God. Besides this, we have been given three great volumes of new scripture outlining and explaining in every detail the simple principles of the gospel. If we lose our way, it will be by our own choice and not because we can't know the truth, except, if like the Jews, we fail to be sufficiently thoughtful and diligent, thereby exposing ourselves to the risk of "ignorantly" rejecting our personal Savior and with him our chances for eternal exaltation.

The second alternative of this question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" is that we may try to be neutral, and believe neither one thing nor the other. That is impossible, for either God is, or God is not. There is no middle ground. It is all or nothing. We either accept him by design or we reject him by default. For when we fail to decide a question one way, we automatically decide it the other way. That is, when we fail to decide to get on the train, we automatically decide to stay off the train.

Yet there is a group of people who insist on trying to maintain this damaging neutrality. It isn't merely that they don't believe; their skepticism goes deeper. They don't give it a thought one way or the other. There is one thing more serious than merely to "not believe," and that is to "not care."

It has been said that there is one folly greater than that of the fool who says in his heart there is no God, and that is the folly of him who says he doesn't know whether there is a God or not. Thereby he is guilty of unbelief rather than disbelief, and unbelief is usually a confession that one has not made sufficient honest inquiry necessary to find the truth.

If a man should err in believing the

gospel of Jesus Christ to be true, he could not possibly be the loser by the mistake. But how irreparable is his loss who should err in supposing the revelations of God to be false. There are many people who try to dispose of this question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" by saying that he was merely a great teacher. This is certainly a poor substitute for knowing the truth. It is also pretty dangerous, for as has been said:

Suppose there is a Christ, but that I should be Christless;  
Suppose there is a cleansing, but that I should remain unclean;  
Suppose there is a Heavenly Father's love, but that I should remain an alien;  
Suppose there is a heaven, but that I should be cast down to hell.

It has been said that "Man's greatest unkindness to man is not to hate him but to be indifferent to him." "He who is indifferent to his friend is unkind to his friend. But he who is indifferent to his Savior is unmerciful unto himself."

Our third alternative to this question of "What shall I do with Jesus?" is that we may accept him. We may accept him eagerly and enthusiastically. We may fill our minds with his word, and consecrate our lives to his service. We have his own counsel on this question. In our own day he has said,

O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. (D & C 4:2.)

Each of us has been complimented by being reserved to live upon the earth in this greatest of all dispensations. We live when a great flood tide of wonders and knowledge and accomplishment has been released in the world. Our forefathers lived on a flat, stationary earth and plowed their ground with wooden sticks. But we live on an earth of power steering and jet propulsion. Noah preached the gospel for many years and failed to bring conversion to a single person outside his own family. Even in the dispensation of Jesus, less than one hundred years had passed before the apostles had all been put to death

and the world was well on its way into darkness of complete apostasy.

But we live in a time when "the field is white already to harvest." We have examples of stake missionaries who have brought conversion into the lives of five or ten or twenty human souls in a single year, and as Samuel Walter Foss cried, "Give me men to match my mountains," so the Church is crying for men to match the great opportunities of the present day.

In 1932 Walter Pitkin wrote a book entitled *Life Begins at Forty*. But life begins every morning. Life begins when we begin, and our real progress

begins when we accept God's answer to that greatest question of our lives, "What shall we do with Jesus?"

May our Heavenly Father inspire us to get the right answer before it is too late, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President David O. McKay:

You have just listened to Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve. We shall now hear Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy. He will be followed by Elder Alma Sonne.

## ELDER MARION D. HANKS

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*



HUMBLY PRAY for direction and inspiration in these few moments. It seems to me that I am almost under compulsion to abandon that which I

might have said, and in view of this warm and heartwarming sermon by President Joseph Fielding Smith and in view of the presence here of this magnificent group of young people, add my testimony and an expression of my conviction to that which has been said.

Memory is a beautiful and wonderful thing. As President Smith named this morning the places he had been and some of the events of his missionary adventures, my heart responded as many of yours must have to the enumeration of places familiar to many of us under circumstances very different from the mission which motivated him. I thought specifically of one island he did not visit but which might well be some day the subject of such a mission, where 5300 American boys gave their lives in order that the cause which they represented might be successful.

It was of one of those boys that I thought this morning, and as President Smith spoke, I tried to remember and write down a few words I once memorized which came from the pen of one of the American boys who died in the battle of Iwo Jima.

This twenty-year-old, (and I know nothing of him save that), was one of

the 5300. In a little ten-cent notebook dated 18 February 1945, the day of his great adventure, he wrote his last will and testament—a short and incisive thing. He might have written about many different subjects. After all, he was only twenty. He was on an island he had never heard of, I suppose, before war took him there. I assume he might have had in his heart some resistance to what awaited him. He might have been thinking about home and loved ones; but what he wrote seems to me to have been inspired of God. These are the words as I remember them, and I think they are right.

"This is the time for new revelation. People don't think much about religion nowadays, but we need a voice from on high, brother, and I don't mean maybe. This thing has got out of human ability to run. I'm no religious fanatic, but we are in a situation where something better than human brains has got to give us advice."

This was the last will and testament of a twenty-year-old boy who died with the thought in his mind that the predicament mankind had worked themselves into was one which only divine help might solve. He cried for new revelation, for a voice from on high, for a voice of spiritual authority. I wondered when I first read it which of those whom I knew and loved and lost had answered his cry—whether it be Marsden or Elwin