

## PRIMARY ASSOCIATION

LaVern W. Parmley, President  
 Arta M. Hale, First Counselor  
 Leone W. Doxey, Second Counselor

with all members of the Board as at present constituted.

President McKay, so far as I was able to see, the voting was unanimous in the affirmative.

## President David O. McKay:

We thank you, brethren and sisters, for your unanimous vote.

Our first speaker this afternoon will

be Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy. He will be followed by Elder Adam S. Bennion of the Council of the Twelve.

## ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

**M**Y BRETHREN AND SISTERS: I sincerely seek an interest in your faith and prayers, that what I shall undertake to say in the next few minutes may be directed by the Spirit of our Heavenly Father and may be delivered in a spirit of love and fellowship, for I love the work of the Lord, and I love his people; I love to work with them.

I have been interested in this conference, especially interested in the many references that have been made to the foreign missionary work and to the newly completed temple in Switzerland. Those references have caused me to reflect upon the purposes of temples. We have had some instruction already as to why we build them. It seems to me that so far as a newly erected temple is concerned, perhaps its major purpose would be to take care of the living, because I believe the accommodations of those already existent would take care of the vicarious work that we have available at the present time. So this newly erected temple is likely to be most beneficial for the living people of Europe. They who have never had the experience of an endowment in the temple before, will receive a wonderful uplift in their spirituality as they enjoy this rare and wonderful privilege which is given to us in the temples of God.

The priesthood has for its purpose integrating into the lives of people the ordinances and the benefits of the gos-

pel of Jesus Christ. The greatest and most supreme of all of these blessings comes to us through the administration of the priesthood in the temples of God and in no other place and were this new temple limited to the benefits the people receive in mortality, its erection and administration would be amply justified, but the benefits of these ordinances when they are carried through to their ultimate end, are not limited to mortality. They penetrate the veil between mortality and eternity, giving people advantages which are past our understanding. Really, they are so sublime and wonderful that they stagger our imagination.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we are told that any man who can attain to the magnification of all of his duties in the Melchizedek Priesthood would and will ultimately attain to the powers of God.

No man who goes into a temple and is content with receiving his own endowments realizes the full possibilities that the temple offers him. He only who takes a wife into the temple and is sealed to her for time and all eternity can ultimately attain to the tremendous and wonderful blessings that are held out as an inducement for righteous living. That seems to me to be the sublime and supreme distinction between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and all other religious denominations.

During the last year, 1954, and this

year up to the present, as we have ministered among the stakes of Zion, there has been placed in our hands an item, a statistical item relative to the numbers of people who avail themselves of this grand and glorious privilege. I have kept account of the stakes I visited last year and this. Last year there were reported 1811 marriages in the stakes that I visited, and I was surprised to learn that less than half of them were consummated in the temple, a fifth of them involving people who were not members of the Church.

It is an astonishing thing. I rather feel to regard that as an unsatisfactory percentage. There may be people who think it is perhaps all that could be expected, but I do not. I think that we ought to strive to increase that percentage, and then once you make up your mind that that should be an incentive and an objective, the question then is: Where are you going to start to bring about an improvement?

It seems to me that the duty of teaching people who are approaching marriageable age, the advantages of celestial and eternal marriage, first, and always, is with the parents. Then I wonder how parents who have not availed themselves of that privilege and who hardly live so as to impress their children with the desirability of perpetuating the marriage relationship, can expect so to impress their children. I have come to decide, brethren and sisters, that the place to start is not with the young folk, but with the old folk, to get the fathers and mothers of young people fully to appreciate the advantages, the wonderful advantages of celestial marriage, and then to present to their growing children an example which will make marriage, a marriage for eternity, attractive to them.

If the parents do not do it, where can we lay the responsibility for it? We have a good many agencies that are supposed to supplement the efforts of the parents, brethren and sisters, but it seems to me that fathers and mothers can never escape the responsibility for this instruction.

So it behooves us to live to be worthy of it. If we have not already availed ourselves of the opportunity to bring our lives into conformity with the

standards of the gospel so that we can avail ourselves of that privilege, what example do we set as a lesson to our children? Words fall flat when they do not show in the example of the parents the value of the teaching.

So I believe that is where we ought to begin, brethren and sisters, and there are many of us who can take it to heart. I am sure there is a wonderful percentage of people who make every possible effort to magnify their calling and obligation, but there are many others of us who do not. We let jealousy and hatred and other things enter into family relationships which disrupt them and disturb them, resulting too frequently in the dissolution of the union, and all of that is not right, brethren and sisters. It is not right, and it behooves us as fathers and mothers to set the example and then give the instruction. That instruction should be subtle. It should be attractive. It should be convincing.

Then to supplement the efforts of the father and the mother, we have the bishopric of the ward. We had a wonderful film on the responsibility of a bishop the other night. There have been bishops in the Church who have seen and used the opportunity that is theirs to instruct their young people when they approach marriageable age in the advantages of celestial and eternal marriage. There, again, is the closest contact I believe that we have in the Church to supplement the efforts of the fathers and the mothers. And if fathers and mothers and bishops and auxiliary associations should combine in a serious effort to teach this truth, I believe we could make it so attractive that the evils which befall many of our young people would cease to be attractive to them, and they would develop a strength in their youth which would carry them through all their future lives in honorable service to God, our Heavenly Father, and in righteous living.

Now what will we do about it? We cannot dream ourselves into it, brethren and sisters, and if any single one who is here today finds opportunity, he should start action at once to correct his life and make it appropriate for the realization of these grand and glorious principles and privileges.

The greatest result of such living is the union of a man and a woman for time and eternity, sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, with the power of eternal increase, an attribute of Godhood. ". . . all that my Father hath shall be given unto him" (D & C 84:38) is the promise made to the man who re-

ceives and magnifies the priesthood. God bless you. Amen.

### President David O. McKay:

President Antoine R. Ivins has just concluded speaking. He will be followed by Elder Adam S. Bennion of the Council of the Twelve.

## ELDER ADAM S. BENNION

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**HIS HAS BEEN a stirring conference, my brethren and sisters, and I trust that the few minutes I may occupy I may catch its spirit in the prayer that was uttered at the beginning of this session. We have always had beautiful music at these sessions. Today's singing was music at its best. While this group of mothers sang, I looked over the brethren down below, and I think I got a new meaning to the Eighth Psalm:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels. . . . (Psalm 8:4-5.)

When they sang that first song, "When Children Pray," I was reminded of the experience of the little fellow, two-and-a-half, who was sitting at the table and was asked to say the blessing. He had his hands crossed over his eyes, said the author, "The better to peek through," and then offered his prayer, understandable only to his mother—and one other. I am sure this choir has brought us into the spirit of Him who understands.

It is an honor to follow the leadership of this great First Presidency and to labor in the fellowship of my Brethren of the General Authorities. The evidence of this conference, I think, must be convincing to all of you that they are strong, devoted men. I give you my witness that they are men of God.

As we walked out of the morning session, I shook hands with Sister John A. Widtsoe, the wife of the man whom I had the honor to follow into this quorum. As we threaded our way through

the narrow lane that is prepared down there in the great crowd that gathers around the car of our President, Sister Widtsoe said, "The soul of people hungers for an ideal." I was impressed that it may be that same hunger that prompts us to believe in God. There are so many evidences, the mystery to me is not that men may believe in God, but as Ballard once wrote, "the great miracle of mankind is the miracle of unbelief."

Dinmore has put it beautifully: "If no help had ever come from God, the impulse to pray would have died out long ago."

Among the stirring things of this conference is the living evidence here today of Thomas E. McKay and Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin. They have been so critically ill that man's power alone could never have made it possible for them to give the witness they have given in this conference.

The other night as I read into the Book of Mormon, I turned to the book of Ether, wherein is this remarkable passage:

Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God. (Ether 12:4.)

As I pondered the meaning of an anchor, I was impressed that faith is that anchor. It is a wonderful thing to be anchored to the truth of Almighty God through faith which bids us to know that he lives. But faith is more than an anchor. As a matter of fact, if I have a theme for these few minutes, it centers in the thought of the faith