

Saturday, April 7

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their human vision which, to say the least, is darkened "by the shadows of earth." The human soul needs an anchorage. Man cannot live by bread alone. Mankind needs a vindication against the tyranny of death and against the ravages of time and decay. Jesus Christ and the prophets have supplied that vindication. The Savior supplied it when, in the throes of agony and death, he said to the felon on the cross: "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"; (Luke 23:43) also, when he appeared to Mary in the garden, when someone said, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She said unto him, "Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him."

Jesus said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" (John 20:15.) She supposed him to be the gardener, and said unto him, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said unto her, "Mary." She turned herself and said unto him, "Rabboni, which is to say, Master." (See John 20:13-16.)

In all the writings, either ancient or modern, there is nothing more beautiful, more touching, and more reassuring than these words quoted by John. Jesus again supplied that vindication when he faced the apostles in an upper room and when he talked and ate with them: "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," (Luke 24:39) said the Master. Again he supplied it when he restored the wavering faith of Thomas Didymus: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27.) That circumstance led up to the last Beatitude, probably the mightiest of them all: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed

are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:29.)

That doctrine is the very foundation of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus again supplied it when he appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus when he asked the question: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4.)

And last, but not least, he gave to the modern world a vindication and an irrefutable witness when he appeared to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, in a grove of trees in New York, where God spoke these words:

"This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (P. of G. P., Joseph Smith 2:17.)

The strongest fortification you and I can have against the uncertainties of life is the testimony which we have received from our Father in heaven concerning the resurrection. May we cherish it, and may we keep it strong; and may we always be valiant for the truth, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just concluded speaking. The congregation will now sing, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet," conducted by Richard Condie. Following the singing, Elder Bruce R. McConkie will address us.

The Singing Mothers Chorus and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," Richard P. Condie conducting.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of the Seventy will now speak to us. Elder McConkie will be followed by Bishop Carl W. Buehner.

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

WE BELIEVE in the law of justification. By virtue of this law, if a man walks, acts, and lives in this life in such a manner that his conduct is justified by the Spirit, he eventually will

attain an inheritance in the celestial world.

On the day the Church was organized, April 6, 1830, the Prophet, writing by way of prophecy and revelation,

summarized the basic doctrines of the Church. Among other things he wrote this:

And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true. (D & C 20:30.)

In the summary of the gospel law given in the days of Father Adam, we find this sentence:

For by the water ye keep the commandment; by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified. (Moses 6:60.)

In the early 1830's, when the Lord was talking to the Prophet about what is called the new and everlasting covenant—that is, about the fulness of the gospel—he revealed this further truth relative to this great law of justification, and I think these following words are a perfect one sentence summary of the whole law of the whole gospel. The Lord said:

... All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power ... are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead. (D & C 132:7.)

One more expression in the revelations has bearing on this. The Lord said:

... the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true. (D & C 76:53.)

Now, to justify is to seal, or to ratify, or to approve; and it is very evident from these revelations that every act that we do, if it is to have binding and sealing virtue in eternity, must be justified by the Spirit. In other words, it must be ratified by the Holy Ghost; or in other words, it must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

All of us know that we can deceive men. We can deceive our bishops or the other Church agents, unless at the moment their minds are lighted by the spirit of revelation; but we cannot de-

ceive the Lord. We cannot get from him an unearned blessing. There will be an eventual day when all men will get exactly and precisely what they have merited and earned, neither adding to nor subtracting from. You cannot with success lie to the Holy Ghost.

Now let us take a simple illustration. If an individual is to gain an inheritance in the celestial world, he has to enter in at the gate of baptism, that ordinance being performed under the hands of a legal administrator. If he comes forward prepared by worthiness, that is, if he is just and true, and gains baptism under the hands of a legal administrator, he is justified by the Spirit in the act which has been performed; that is, it is ratified by the Holy Ghost, or it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. As a result it is of full force and validity in this life and in the life to come.

If an individual thereafter turns from righteousness and goes off and wallows in the mire of iniquity, then the seal is removed, and so we have this principle which keeps the unworthy from gaining unearned blessings. The Lord has placed a bar which stops the progress of the unrighteous; he has placed a requirement which we must meet. We must gain the approval and receive the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost if eventually and in eternity we are to reap the blessings that we hope to reap.

The same thing that is true of baptism is true of marriage. If a couple comes forward worthily, a couple who is just and true, and they enter into that ordinance under the hands of a legal administrator, a seal of approval is recorded in heaven. Then assuming they do not thereafter break that seal, assuming they keep the covenant and press forward in steadfastness and in righteousness, they go on in the next world as husband and wife; and in and after the resurrection, that ordinance performed in such a binding manner here has full force, efficacy, and validity.

I think perhaps this doctrine, as almost all other doctrines that we teach in the Church, leads us back to the same central conclusion, which is that it is obligatory upon us to keep the commandments of God if we ever expect to inherit the blessings that he has promised the Saints. We should re-

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mind ourselves again and again of these words which he has spoken:

... he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come. (D & C 59:23.)

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. We shall now hear from Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric. Bishop Buehner will be followed by Elder Marion G. Romney, our concluding speaker.

BISHOP CARL W. BUEHNER

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

IT IS TRULY a spiritual feast to attend one of these great conferences. There has been a theme running through these talks that has said to me that we are a great Church of action, and the more action the greater the Church. I am sure we believe in being doers of the word and not hearers only.

I constantly marvel at some of the stories I hear of the faith of the young people in the Church, and I have been inspired by them. I heard a story of a student of psychology who was given an assignment to ask a series of questions of some of our very young people as part of his assignment at the university. Among the questions that he asked was: "Who are the three greatest men in the world?"

The first youngster he asked the question of was seven years of age, and the seven-year-old boy said: "George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Brigham Young." And I thought that was a pretty good answer for a seven-year-old boy. The student went two houses down the street and asked the same question of a five-year-old boy: "Who are the three greatest men in the world?" And the five-year-old boy said: "Our Heavenly Father, Jesus, and President McKay." If you could add fifty years to the age of the five-year-old child, I doubt he could give a better answer fifty years later than he did when he was interviewed at five years of age. That was a remarkable answer for a five-year-old boy, and it denotes the teaching that is going on in the homes of some of our young people.

Then this same man asked another question of a lad just turning three years of age—not much more than learning to talk. He said to this boy three,

"Who is God?" And the youngster, after a second, said, "Sunday School." He identified the word God with Sunday School. This man said: "I asked the same question of a girl much older one day: 'Who is God?' and she said, 'That's a naughty word. We do not say that in our home.'"

These statements are full of meaning to me, and I appreciate them. Good training by the parents of their children, even though they are very young, usually stays with them all their life. Think of these same youngsters a little later when they hold the Aaronic Priesthood. I have shaken hands with hundreds of young men, and girls of corresponding ages, who are attending this great conference because of having a perfect record in attending all of their meetings during the past year.

Last evening Elder LeGrand Richards and I had the honor of being entertained by a group from the West Arcadia Ward of the Pasadena Stake. Some forty-one youngsters have been brought here by their bishopric because they are one hundred percenters in the Church, and I never saw such a fine group and felt such a marvelous spirit as I did among these young people. I sat next to a girl who has been a 100 percenter, who has only been a member of the Church for three weeks, and sitting on the same row was another girl twenty years of age who had been a hundred percenter for a whole year. Her parents have been objecting to her becoming a member of the Church. She said, "I am just waiting to be twenty-one years of age so that I can be baptized a member of the Church. My parents, not understanding what this means to me, have been objecting to