

Sunday, April 8

Third Day

today that there is evidence sufficient to any honest man or any honest woman who really loves the Lord that we do in very deed have the kingdom of God to offer unto them, and I bear you that witness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder LeGrand Richards, a member of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

### ELDER MARION D. HANKS

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

**I** NEED THE inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit and earnestly pray for them this morning.

In our files on Temple Square we have a great many letters from people who have come to us seeking to learn something of the truths which have been testified of here this morning. We have letters from many who have not been here but who have come in contact in some way with the Church or its principles or its people, and who have written to express (so often in almost the same words) what so many here have expressed, that they feel, they sense, they experience among the Latter-day Saints something different from anything they have ever known before.

Friday morning, at the opening session of this conference, we had the pleasure of the presence here of a fine gentleman who had been introduced to us by letter from President George Romney of the Detroit Stake. Prior to that session and following it, we talked for some hours with this wonderful, dedicated man. He had come here to learn a little about this feeling, this sense of dedication, this peace which he said he had experienced among the Mormons. He is a man of real loyalty to principle, whose mind and mouth and life are clean and decent, and who is seeking earnestly to do that which God would have him do.

He wanted to know many things about us. He knew much already. One statement he made, like those which I have quoted, almost to the word, was, "I have been an active, loyal, participating member of a certain church, but I think something is missing." He had come here to try to find out what.

May I bear witness that this experience has happened many times, and that out of it we have extracted the

simple lesson that the truths of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ are available here to men, in reality, and that as they seek them and find them and honor them, their lives enjoy a kind of peace and fulfilment they did not know before.

I suppose it is the most fundamental and axiomatic thing we might say of religious faith that to be fruitful and productive of good it has to be based in truth. The fact that there is widespread interest in religion in this nation and the world does not warrant the supposition that all those who have religious interest and religious faith will enjoy the peace and the sense of purpose and the abundant life promised by the Lord to those who would find and follow his way, for it is not enough simply to be "religious" or to be "sincere" in one's convictions. It is not enough to be sincerely convinced of something that is false. We must have faith in true principles and live them courageously if our religion is to help us accomplish God's purposes for us.

The call for faith comes from many quarters. Carl Jung, considered by many to be one of the most important living psychiatrists, is reported recently to have said that among all his patients over thirty-five there was not one whose basic problem was not lack of religious faith. Recently in the Christmas issue of a great magazine there was printed a statement that has much meaning to the Latter-day Saints who know the statement of the prophet Amulek, quoted in Alma, chapter 10, that the prayers and lives of a righteous remnant preserved the land, and who know also that there are other accounts of this same circumstance recorded in the Book of Mormon. Concluding an editorial, the writer said: "No doubt most Ameri-

cans are less religious than they should be. They then owe a vast and continuing debt to the saving remnant in their midst who do hunger and thirst after righteousness and walk humbly before their God. They do not do this for America's sake, but without them America would be little more than a geographical expression."

A widely known statement made in recent years by a great military leader calls our generation "ethical infants," "moral adolescents."

We join with all those who recognize, as those quoted have been shown to recognize, the great need for honor, integrity, humility, prayerfulness, righteousness, the whole truth—all attributes and characteristics flowing from and concomitant to deep religious faith which is founded on truth.

The witness you have heard expressed here today is that God has in our day restored through living prophets, by revelation, the simple, basic, beautiful, life-giving, peace-bringing truths which men of old knew and which Christ himself came to teach in the Meridian of Time.

May we take time to mention three contributions that the restoration has made in supplying the deep needs of man for religious truth founded in faith? First, I note the answers supplied for the universal problems men have concerning God, themselves, and their relationship with their Creator. Second, the restored Church has had revealed a program for living, a guide to conduct, which can lead one to fruitful, satisfying, purposeful living here in mortality. Third, I speak of the spiritual conviction, confidence, assurance—testimony, we sometimes call it—which will motivate one to think differently, live differently, to be different than he otherwise would be.

The President of the United States is quoted as having said something last year which has special meaning to Latter-day Saints, in connection with the first contribution of the restoration we have mentioned. These are his words: "Whence did we come? Why are we here? What is the true reason for our existence? And where are we going? For the answers we have . . . the faith . . . of our religious convictions."

One of the most important aspects of the restoration is that it supplies answers to these most fundamental spiritual questions. We may learn who we really are, and what our relationship is with Him from whom we came. We are taught that the Bible may be believed when it teaches that we are the children, the literal spirit children, of our Father in heaven. We have assurance that Christ was indeed the Living Son of God, that he came to teach men how to live and died that we might live eternally. We know that men are free and responsible agents in a world where there are alternative forces and courses to choose among, and that we are not only free to choose but also under the necessity of choosing the path and course we shall pursue. Man has within him, in an embryonic sense, those basic attributes which are characteristic of our Father in heaven and which are in him in their fulness. Man is capable of love, mercy, and justice, attributes which have their fullest development in him. We have assurance through the restored gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are literal children of God, that we can become like him, that the ultimate of our possibility is that someday under his guidance we may even participate with him in his great creative work.

The truths of the restoration testify that there was a plan before this world was, and that that plan contemplated our earthly existence, our freedom, and our responsibility, and that when we had left this mortal life, we should continue to live as really and as certainly as we here exist. Moreover, they testify (and this is what first brought the Church to the attention of our friend from the east) that there is a divinely-inspired program for living among us which is designed to lead men to happiness here on this earth. What is that program? You know it well. It is a program of faith, repentance, baptism, and reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost; it is a program requiring an enduring and dedicated hunger and thirst for righteousness, a life of honor and honesty, and a "love of God and of all men."

There are able and sincere men crying out all over the world today for men to

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Third Day

"believe," to "believe." But as our friend said Friday, "They do not tell us *what* to believe or what to *do* to find happiness."

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints testifies to the world that the program restored by the Master of men in our day is the same program he taught men when he was among them. And as Christ taught men to have faith, to repent of their sins, to be baptized for the remission of those sins, in order that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, so taught Paul and the others. Do you remember the occasion described in the second chapter of Acts, an occasion almost analogous to scenes we hear about in various parts of the world today, when the multitude, having been taught the mission and message of Jesus (but by the apostles who have been "chosen" and "ordained" by Christ so do) found faith in the Messiah, and came to Peter and the others and said; "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" What did Peter answer? Did he tell them to go to some Church, any church, and pursue any program or course they chose, whatever it might be, so long as they were sincere? His answer is recorded in the Holy Bible that all may read:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts 2:38-39.)

It is revealed anew in our day that not only must a man believe, but also that he must believe that which is true, and he must do that which God has commanded.

There is one final thing we spoke of: if one is to learn the answers to the basic spiritual problems of his life and is to pursue a purposeful program fruitfully and happily, he must have a motivation, an "inner aim" our friends sometimes call it, a spiritual assurance, a testimony which will inspire and impel him to learn and to live. The enjoyment of that testimony is one of the great possibilities that has come to us through the restoration of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We testify to you that religious faith is important and urgently necessary, but it must be based in truth. The truth available to all men is that God in our very dispensation has spoken, restoring anew the ancient truths, restoring anew the only gospel, the good word of God for his children.

That testimony is among us; many of us enjoy it. I testify of it humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy has just addressed us. The Choir and congregation will now join in singing, "Redeemer of Israel," conducted by Elder J. Spencer Cornwall.

After the singing, Elder Antoine R. Ivins will address us.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel."

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder Hugh B. Brown.

## ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

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

**M**Y BELOVED brethren and sisters: It is a sobering thought to face you wonderful people and hope to say some encouraging word. My own ministry has been one of an effort to encourage myself and others to do better the things we have to do as members of the Church.

It is almost twenty-five years since I first faced a congregation in this capacity. I have enjoyed those twenty-five years very much. There have been a few echoes come back that help has been rendered to people. When it comes, it is always satisfying.

I believe that without reserve I can