

## ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**M**Y BELOVED brothers and sisters and friends: This has been a most inspirational experience in three days of general conference.

Elder Clifford E. Young has been speaking of the boy who communed with Jehovah. We all sang that song a few moments ago, "Praise to the Man Who Communed with Jehovah." I should now like to pay my devotion to that Jehovah with whom he communed, my Lord Jesus Christ. I love him with all my heart. We are coming to the close of this great gathering. For seven sessions every prayer has been made in the name of Jesus Christ. Every one of the many eloquent sermons has closed in the name of Jesus Christ. I think they have all begun with it also, sometimes unexpressed.

Mention has already been made of the meeting that was held in the temple on Thursday, prior to the beginning of this conference—a preparation meeting for all of the members of the General Authorities. It was a meeting of fasting and the Sacrament, of prayer and testimony. There were appeals unto our Heavenly Father that this great conference might touch the hearts of the many people who would listen, and as one of the concluding speakers I should like to bear witness that the Lord has answered those prayers, for it has been an inspirational conference, and our Brethren have spoken with great strength and power, and each one has inspired me.

In my files I find a description of the Savior written by one who gave his own artistic concept. I give it to you without author as it came to me:

There lives at this time in Judea a man of singular virtue whose name is Jesus, whom the barbarians esteem as a prophet; but his followers love and adore him as the offspring of God. He calls back the dead from the graves and heals all sorts of diseases with a word or a touch. He is a tall man, well shaped, an amiable and reverent aspect, his hair of a color that can hardly be matched, falling into graceful curls, waving about and very agreeably couching upon his shoulders, parted on the

crowns of his head, running as a stream to the front after the fashion of the Nazarites. His forehead is high, large, imposing; his cheeks without spot or wrinkle, beautiful with a lovely red, his nose and mouth formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard, and of a color suitable to his hair, reaching below his chin and parted in the middle like a fork; his eyes, bright blue, clear and serene look innocent, dignified, manly and mature; in proportion of body most perfect and captivating, his arms and hands delectable to behold. He rebukes with majesty, counsels with mildness, and his whole address, whether in word or deed, being eloquent and grave. No man has seen him laugh, yet his manners are exceedingly pleasant, but he has wept frequently in the presence of men. He is temperate, modest, wise—a man for his extraordinary beauty and divine perfection, surpassing the children of men in every sense.

Also in the temple meeting above mentioned, President McKay read to us a paragraph describing the Master, and if I may have his permission I should like to repeat it to you:

## Description of Christ

The following epistle is said to have been taken by Napoleon from the records of Rome when he deprived that city of so many valuable manuscripts. It was written at the time and on the spot where Jesus commenced his ministry, by Publius Lentulus, Governor of Judea, to the senate of Rome, Caesar, emperor. It was the custom in those days for the governor to write home any event that transpired while he held his office.

Conscript Fathers: In these our days appeared a man named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted as a prophet of great truth; but his own disciples call him the son of God. He hath raised the dead and cured all manner of diseases. He is a man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with a ruddy countenance, such as the beholder may both love and fear. His hair is the color of filbert when fully ripe, plain to his ear, whence downward it is more of orient color, curling and waving on his shoulders; in the middle of his head is a seam of long hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is plain and delicate; the face without spot or wrinkle, beautiful with a

comely red, his nose and mouth are exactly formed; his beard is the color of his hair and thick, not of any length but forked.

In reproving he is terrible; admonishing, courteous; in speaking, very modest and wise; in proportion of body, well-shaped. None have seen him laugh, many have seen him weep. A man for his surpassing beauty excelling the children of men.

Whether authentic or not I do not know, but it may stir our imaginations.

I have a little paragraph from another writer, Charles Edward Jefferson, who says,

But when we come to Jesus, we find ourselves in the presence of a man without a flaw. He was enthusiastic, blazing with enthusiasm, but he never became fanatical. He was emotional. Men could feel the throbbing of his heart, but he never became hysterical. He was imaginative, full of poetry and music, seeing pictures everywhere, throwing upon everything he touched a light that never was on land or sea, the inspiration of a poet's dream. But he never was flighty. He was practical, hard-headed, matter-of-fact, but he was never prosaic, never dull. His life always had in it the glamour of romance. He was courageous, but never reckless; prudent, but never a coward; unique, but not eccentric; sympathetic, but never sentimental. Great streams of sympathy flowed from his tender heart toward those who needed sympathy; but at the same time streams of lava glowed from the same heart to scorch and overwhelm the workers of iniquity. He was pious, but there was not a trace about him of sanctimoniousness.

That is the picture that men have of him. In my own office at home and at the Church Office Building I have rather large pictures of Jesus as he has been portrayed by artists. I appreciate them, but they do not give me the complete or acceptable picture of the Lord, and no picture I have ever seen is adequate. I can never see the Christ with my eyes open. I must close them to get my concepts of him.

The Christ of whom they spoke and whom they tried to picture was the Master as he lived on the earth among mortals. I should like now to give you another picture of the Christ as it is given by one who saw him after he was immortal, after his resurrection. I quote:

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation . . . was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, . . .

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw, . . .

One like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

. . . and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; . . .

Write the things which thou hast seen, . . . (Rev. 1:9-19.)

I think of the Lord as he walked through Galilee and Palestine. I realize that he must have become tired and hungry and weary and thirsty, but he was ever patient. He was loving; he was kind. It seems that though it was necessary at times to rebuke people, he did what he told us in the modern revelations to do, he reproved then showed forth afterwards an increase of love toward him he had reproved (see D & C 121:43)—he had his arm around them, too. O how I love him for his tenderness—so forgiving, so kind.

I think of him on the cross during his great agony. He was thinking of his sweet mother down beneath him. He was tender and kind as he said to John, "Behold thy mother," and to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son!" (See John 19:26-27.) And from that hour that disciple took her into his own home.

I think of his kindness when proud and loving mothers so wanted their children to have a sight of the Master, to touch the hem of his garment, and they were pushed away—(I think of that incident at the conclusion of nearly

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every session of conference as we go out the back door and people crowd around to just see and speak to Christ's modern prophet—and he said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:14.)

I think of the Christ who came in our own day to the Prophet Joseph Smith and his associate in the Kirtland Temple.

The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. (D & C 110:1-4.)

Several have said no one ever saw Him laugh; however, I can imagine the Lord Jesus Christ smiling as he looked upon his people in their devotion. This great conference—with its thirty-one thousand men and boys holding the Holy Priesthood, in attendance at one meeting; with its tens of thousands who have come long distances to listen and to worship together, and to hear the word of that Lord Jesus Christ—must have pleased him greatly.

I think he smiles when he looks upon this his prophet, President David O. McKay, who gives such inspired leadership to his people, who is so close to him, who hears his word, and who receives his revelations. I think the Lord Jesus Christ is smiling when he looks into the homes of this people and sees them on their knees in family prayer night and morning, the children participating also. I think he smiles when he sees young husbands and wives, and older ones, with deep affection for each other, who continue their courtship as our prophet has said, who continue to love each other with all their souls until the day they die and then accentuate it through eternity.

I think he is pleased with the families which sacrifice and share, like the fam-

ily I visited a week ago and with whom I had lunch. There were ten wonderful children in one family—all happy together, and working all their problems out together, sharing all their limited assets together! I think the Lord Jesus Christ is smiling when he looks down and sees more than four thousand men this past year—four thousand men with some of their wives and some of their children who were inactive a year ago, but today are happy in the kingdom, many of whom have been to the holy temple of God and had their endowments and their sealings, and who with tears of gratitude thank the Lord for his program.

I think I see tears of joy in his eyes and a smile on his lips as he sees the twenty-one thousand new souls who have come unto him this year, who have professed his name, who have gone into the waters of baptism, and I think he loves those who helped to convert them also.

I see him smile as he sees his numerous people on their knees in repentance, changing their lives, making them brighter and cleaner, and more like their Heavenly Father and their Brother, Jesus Christ.

I think he is pleased and smiles as he sees youth as they organize their lives and protect and fortify themselves against the errors of the day. I think he is first grieved, and then perhaps pleased, when he sees, as he must have done a few days ago in my office, a young couple who had made serious error and were now on their knees together with their hands tightly clasped together. There must have been joy in his smile when he saw into their souls and saw that they were making the adjustment, as their tears bathed my hand which I had tenderly placed on theirs.

Oh, I love the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that I can show to him and manifest my sincerity and devotion. I want to live close to him. I want to be like him, and I pray that the Lord will help all of us that we may so be as he said to his Nephite disciples, "Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?" and he answered his own question by saying, "Even as I am," (3 Nephi 27:27) and so, as Elder ElRay L. Christiansen

said, I go from this conference determined to live even closer to my Heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ than I have ever lived before. And I

pray this in his name—in the name of him whom I love, adore, and worship, in the name of our Lord and Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

**T**HE FIRST SPEAKER of this session, Elder Lee, referred to the "shortest designated highway in the State," and that shortest highway leads to the penitentiary. His excellent discourse and the inspirational discourses of the other brethren who have followed him have inspired us all. The spirit of the Lord is here, and what I am going to say in a few words I hope will be in harmony with the spirit of those addresses.

That reference to the highway reminded me of something to which we should have called the attention of 31,000 men of the priesthood last evening. But now I am glad that I overlooked it, for here is a better time and place, I think, to mention it. It refers to a number of young people who get on that shortest of highways. For several years we have asked the bishops to help us to protect them from getting on that highway. For a while we received help, and then that help practically ceased. There are two members of the Council of the Twelve appointed to receive your suggestions and recommendations, but these two members are helpless without your suggestions.

In brief, many of our young girls, particularly, and not a few of our young boys, leave their homes, with the consent of parents, sometimes without the consent, and they come to larger centers in hopes of bettering their financial conditions, probably social conditions; and without proper guidance, without help, not a few get on that one-way road. And so we have asked that whenever one of those girls or one of the boys leaves home to come to the city, the bishop will send word to Elder Spencer W. Kimball or Elder Mark E. Petersen giving the home town address, and, if possible, the address of the boy or girl in Salt Lake City, Ogden, or some other center.

The ward teachers should know the name of that boy and the name of that girl, for it is his duty "to watch over

the church always, to be with and strengthen them." (D & C 20:53.) If the teacher will notify the bishop that one of the members of his district is leaving home, and the bishop will inform the committee of the Twelve of the fact, safeguards can be put around the young person. They are not bad boys or bad girls, intrinsically, but there are traps into which they may fall here and be caught in sin, as we have heard. Bishops, will you please do that? Ward teachers throughout the Church, will you please watch over the Church always—over those who are sick, those who need your help, and particularly some of these discouraged young people?

I think the thought that I am trying to get over is well expressed by that poem which the Presiding Bishopric has put into the hands of the lesser priesthood of the Church. It is as follows:

"He stood at the crossroads all alone  
The sunlight in his face;  
He had no thought for the world unknown,  
He was set for a manly race.  
But the roads stretched east and the roads stretched west,  
And the lad knew not which road was best.  
So he chose the road that led him down,  
And he lost the race and the victor's crown.  
He was caught at last in an angry snare,  
Because no one stood at the crossroads there  
To show him the better road.

"Another day at the selfsame place,  
A boy with high hopes stood,  
He too was set for a manly race,  
He too was seeking the things that were good,  
But one was there who the roads did know  
And that one showed him which way to go.