

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE
Of the First Council of the Seventy

PRESIDENT MCKAY spoke this morning in plainness and with great force and power, saying that we should keep the commandments of God; that we should be doers of the word, and not hearers only; that we should work out our salvation with fear and trembling before God—all in accordance with the principle that it is not he who saith, "Lord, Lord," but he that doeth the will of the Father, who will gain eternal salvation.

Now I would like to call attention to one particular commandment—a commandment given in that revelation which is known as the law of the Church, a commandment which, if kept, will give us joy and peace and happiness in this life and assure us of that fulness of salvation to which our President referred this morning. The Lord said this: "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else" (D & C 42:22); and similarly we might say, "Thou shalt love thy husband with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto him and none else."

Let us turn the light of introspection upon ourselves. How much do we love our husbands and our wives? How much do we love our children? How fervent and realistic is our desire to have the family unit continue in eternity? May I say something relative to the relationship between the continuation of the family unit in eternity, and receiving the fulness of salvation, the fulness being eternal life or exaltation in the kingdom of God.

Every thinking person knows there will be different degrees of reward in the life hereafter. The mere fact that men are to be judged according to their works indicates that varying rewards will be meted out. Our Lord said,

In my Father's house are many mansions:

—and then to emphasize the self-evident nature of that great truth, he added,

If it were not so, I would have told you. (John 14:2.)

We know of kingdoms of glory likened respectively to the stars, the moon, and

the sun, as pertaining to their glory. These kingdoms are the telestial, terrestrial, and celestial. The celestial is the kingdom of God, the kingdom we may attain through the Church, through the gospel, and through personal righteousness. Having that perspective, please note the words of this revelation:

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase. (D & C 131:1-4.)

In exactly the same sense that repentance and baptism is the gate which puts us on the path leading to salvation in the celestial kingdom, so this order of marriage called celestial marriage opens the door and puts us on the path whereby we may press forward to eternal life and exaltation in the highest heaven of the celestial world. The revelation on marriage, speaking of people who have opportunity in this life to abide the terms and conditions of this eternal marriage covenant and who do not do it, says that in the world to come there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage for them. Those who do not avail themselves of the opportunity in this life to enter the celestial law of marriage become "ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory," the Lord says:

For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever. (D & C 132:16-17.)

In eternity there will be on the one hand immortality, which means to live forever as a resurrected being; there will be on the other hand eternal life, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God.

Friday, April 5

First Day

There will be on the one hand those who are servants, who are ministering angels; there will be on the other hand exalted and glorified personages. The difference between these two categories—the one on the one hand, and the other on the other—the difference is the continuation of the family unit in eternity. By definition and in its nature, exaltation consists in the continuation of the family unit through all ages yet to be. If the family unit continues, if husband and wife go into the spirit world as a married couple and come up in the resurrection continuing as husband and wife, then exaltation is assured. If they go there separately and singly—either not having entered into this celestial order or, having entered into it, having not kept the terms and conditions and laws that appertain to it—they will have immortality only and not eternal life.

All men will get all that they are able to receive, all that a gracious and merciful Father can give them, but the fulness is reserved for those who abide the whole gospel law, who keep all of the terms and conditions of the new and everlasting covenant of marriage.

Now, how much do you love your husband or your wife? With what desire do you seek eternal exaltation in the mansions hereafter? Let it be remembered that love is measured in terms of obedience and of service, in accordance with the principle, "If ye

love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) Accordingly, if we have in our hearts a love, born of the Spirit of Christ, for our families, and for that matter, for our own salvation, we will seek to do those things which will qualify us to gain recommends to the temple, there to be sealed in the eternal marriage union; and then having been so sealed, we will desire with all our hearts to walk in the light, to keep the covenant that we have made, so that it will be of full force and validity in the eternal world, having been bound on earth and sealed in heaven, having been ratified by the Spirit here, and made of full force and validity in the mansions hereafter. There is not any single thing, any single act or performance that any Latter-day Saint ever does in this world as important as marrying the right person in the right place by the right authority, because that kind of marriage is the gate to peace and contentment and happiness in this life, and it opens the door to the attainment of the fulness of the kingdom of the Father hereafter. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy. Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us, and Brother Lee will be followed by Elder Alma Sonne.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

THIS MORNING in the opening session our beloved President lifted my soul with his remarkable address, and it pleases me to know that my whole soul responds to the truthfulness of the great message which he gave us. I trust that in these few minutes what I say will be in full harmony with that about which he has instructed us.

The sermon of President Bruce R. McConkie has laid a remarkable foundation for the thoughts which I have had on this same important subject, so important to the welfare of all our Father's

children here and in the world to come. So the spirit willing, and if I may have an interest in your faith and prayers, I would like to speak briefly about this sacred ordinance of temple marriage which is so vital to every human soul.

I should like to introduce my few remarks by relating three simple incidents that have occurred on this block; then I should like to bring one or two powerful lessons from the scriptures and from the sermons of some of our leaders; and then conclude, in the few moments