

been forgotten were it not for their association and connection with him during their lives.

What is the position of the Church with respect to this great, outstanding character about whom we have heard so much today? This morning we heard a wonderful and powerful sermon delivered by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., concerning Christ's resurrection, his last three days on the earth, and the atonement he wrought out on Calvary. There are those who claim to be followers of the Nazarine who deny, ridicule, and endeavor to explain away the great miracles connected with his ministry among men. To them we say, "Christianity is either history or nothing." To deny Christ's divinity is to turn one's back on the integrity and reliability of many scriptural declarations and to question the revelations of God.

Mormonism declares that Jesus Christ lived upon the earth, that he mingled with men, that he preached his powerful Sermon on the Mount to a small group of friends and associates who gathered on a mountainside, that he performed mighty miracles, that he was born of the Virgin Mary, that he was put to death on the cross by his enemies, that he arose from the grave on the third day after his crucifixion, and

finally, that he is the Son of God. Mormonism also declares that he chose twelve apostles, that he commissioned them to preach the gospel of salvation which he had taught them, and that like him they performed many miracles in his name and established his Church upon the earth.

May we always remember him and keep all the commandments which he has given us, I pray in his name. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

We have just listened to Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve. The congregation and chorus will now sing, "Redeemer of Israel," under the direction of Elder James L. Bradley. After the singing we shall hear from Bishop Carl W. Buehner.

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The congregation and the Combined Chorus joined in singing the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel," James L. Bradley directing.

**President David O. McKay:**

Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church will now address us. Bishop Buehner will be followed by Elder Clifford E. Young.

## BISHOP CARL W. BUEHNER

### *Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

I esteem it a great honor, my brothers and sisters, to be in your presence and to bear you my humble testimony of the divinity of this great work. As I look into the faces of this large audience of leaders gathered from all parts of the Church, fully aware of the tremendous activity going on in the Church, I feel to say, "God bless you every one."

Last Wednesday and Thursday, I enjoyed the honor of attending and participating in a number of sessions of the outstanding Primary conference. I came to a realization, more than ever before, of the marvelous influence of these sisters on the lives of our children. I would like wholeheartedly to commend them for the fine work they are

doing and assure them that they have the love and blessing of each of us.

Among other things, they are teaching the Articles of Faith in language the children can understand. This after all is the very heart of the gospel. They are also conducting departments which are providing a great stimulation in preparing the young boys to receive the Aaronic Priesthood.

I heard a story the other day that could well be the result of the teaching of the Primary organization. This concerned a family who came to the bishop at tithing settlement time. In the group were the father, mother, and a number of children. As they came into the bishop's office, he greeted each of

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them, and when they were all seated, the bishop said, "I assume you have come to talk to me about your tithing and that you would each like to express your wishes concerning your own tithing account. Shall we start with little Johnny on the end of the line? Johnny, would you like to come forward and settle your tithing?" To this Johnny replied, "Yes," and he reached in his pocket, brought out a little worn purse, and after fumbling around in it a little while, found a dime, two nickels, and two or three pennies. He put these on the bishop's desk and said, "Bishop, this is my tithing in full." The bishop congratulated Johnny, wrote him out a receipt, indicated on it that it was tithing in full, and gave it to him. Returning to his seat, Johnny very proudly displayed the receipt to his father and said, "Dad, when you settle yours, I hope you will get one that says on it, 'Paid in full.'"

Faith-promoting stories such as this indicate to me that someone is providing our children with a desire to keep the principles of the gospel.

I feel honored and very grateful that I have been found worthy to be one of those selected to preside over the Aaronic Priesthood in this growing Church of ours. I sincerely hope that the Lord will assist us in our objective of saving every boy who comes under our direction. Some of the bishops are catching the vision and spirit of this. Not long ago I sat with one of these brethren while attending a ward teaching convention. He said to me, "Bishop, we have not lost one boy of Aaronic Priesthood age in our ward in the past five years." And just recently in a ward in the West Jordan Stake, a ward Aaronic Priesthood adviser made a similar statement, "Bishop, we have lost only one boy in six years." Then I recall at Christmas time being in my own ward and hearing my own bishop say to me, "This morning out of forty-eight boys holding the Aaronic Priesthood in our ward, forty-four were present at priesthood meeting, three had good excuses, and out of the forty-eight, only one is a problem boy." I imagine when all of the big guns are centered on that one boy, he will succumb, too. It will be easier for him

to come to church than to endure all the pressure that will be put on him to bring him back into activity.

I have always been a great believer in our young men. I am happy to be associated with them, and I appreciate what you are doing to help us keep every one of them active in the Church.

A charming sister, Janet Frame Mecham, whose husband is the chairman of the Aaronic Priesthood committee in one of our stakes, observing the activities of her husband as he went about the work assigned to him, wrote the following lines:

*Let's Accelerate in Fifty-Eight*

In fifty-eight let's co-operate  
To accomplish what we designate.  
Our record we'll accentuate  
As each member we will stimulate.

In the plan we want to instigate,  
Let's not one of us procrastinate,  
But each thing we shall inaugurate,  
Let's unanimously corroborate.

There are methods we'll incorporate,  
And others we must perpetuate.  
But some we cannot tolerate  
As we keep our plans right up-to-date.

Let each one our time here dedicate  
To each job our leaders delegate,  
And our efforts unitedly concentrate  
So each priesthood bearer will participate.

Joy and blessings forever compensate  
For the work and plans we consummate.  
There are stakes we could impersonate,  
But each one we should evaluate.

Take the best from each and contemplate  
How their methods we'll accelerate  
So our record will reverberate  
Through the Church in nineteen fifty-eight.

I am sure her husband could not have produced such a masterpiece.

Our problem does not concern us so much with the boys under twenty-one since their records are improving each year but with those who are over twenty-one who through the years have slipped into inactivity. These brethren we designate as senior members of the Aaronic Priesthood. I do not know when these brethren all got away from us, but I do know that we now have the greatest program we have ever had to bring them back to an appreciation of this great power called the priesthood—Aaronic

Priesthood. Last year some three hundred and fifty schools for senior members of the Aaronic Priesthood were held in the Church. From these schools came a tremendous result for good. I have heard men bear their testimonies with tears dripping from their cheeks, grateful for the program of reactivation and that someone has gone out of his way to put his arm around them and invite them back into the activities of the priesthood program.

Brethren, we have some eighty thousand men like this. I hope through the united effort of all of the organizations that can make a contribution that we will have success in bringing back into activity most of these men who are depriving themselves of the blessings of our Heavenly Father, because they are now outside and not inside enjoying the blessings which come from magnifying the priesthood that they bear.

Recently, a sister who is the wife of one of these brethren said among other things while addressing a session of quarterly conference, "All I want for Christmas is a temple marriage." Her husband sitting in front of her heard this request. I would like eighty thousand other women to challenge their husbands to prepare their lives so that there can be eighty thousand temple marriages of this same type. We would strengthen the activity in this Church as we have never seen it before.

Responding to an assignment to give a talk, a senior member of the Aaronic Priesthood in the Portland Stake quoted a few familiar lines from Benjamin Franklin's *Almanac*:

For the want of a nail, the shoe was lost.  
 For the want of the shoe, the horse was lost.  
 For the want of the horse, the rider was lost.  
 For the want of the rider, the battle was lost.  
 For the loss of the battle, the kingdom was lost.  
 And all because of a nail.

This senior member paraphrased these few lines, and this is what he said:

For the want of activity, the love was lost.  
 For the want of love, the service was lost.  
 For the want of service, the faith was lost.  
 For the want of faith, the repentance was lost.  
 For the want of repentance, the salvation was lost.

For the loss of salvation, a place in God's kingdom was lost.  
 And all because of the want of activity.

I do not have time to elaborate on this, but I think that man had a great thought.

What is the Aaronic Priesthood? It is a power that has been delegated to man that has in it great blessings and great opportunities to serve. The Aaronic Priesthood was named after a devoted and faithful man, Aaron, the brother of Moses, who was given to Moses as a spokesman since, as the scriptures record, Moses was slow of speech. It was by the power of the Aaronic Priesthood that John the Baptist came crying in the wilderness and told of one coming who was greater and mightier than he and who would perform great miracles. It was by the power of this same priesthood that the Savior of the world was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. It was this same John the Baptist who under the direction of Peter, James, and John restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. After his ascension, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, by the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood that had come to them, baptized each other in the Susquehanna River. It is the power by which the emblems of the Sacrament are administered each Sunday and given to the members of the Church in remembrance of the broken body and the spilt blood of the Savior of the world.

It is the power by which young men are designated as ward teachers to go with their senior companions into the homes of members of the Church to preach, teach, expound, and the other things spoken of in the Doctrine and Covenants. It is also the power by which a young boy twelve years of age comes to your door and offers you a blessing by inviting you to make a contribution to the fast offering funds of the Church. It is a great honor to be a bearer of the Aaronic Priesthood and to magnify that power which has come through being so honored.

I would like to say to the seventy or eighty thousand other bearers of the Aaronic Priesthood who are men, now likely heads of families, I wish that to

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you, too, could come the blessing that comes to every active bearer of the Aaronic Priesthood. I would like you to know that you are invited to come into our chapels. There have been many who have said, "I have been away so long, I think I am not wanted." You will never know how much you are wanted, and you will never know how much good it will do you, too. The Church needs you, but you also need the Church. Your family needs you, as a man magnifying the priesthood, to stand at the head of your home.

I have heard a few verses of poetry quoted that have a line which goes something like this, "And I stepped in your footsteps all the way." Would we be proud if our boys stepped in our footsteps all the way? We would if we were magnifying the priesthood and enjoying the blessings that come to us through faithful participation.

In conclusion I would like to say that it has been reported that someone said a dirt-road traveler traveling along the highway saw a sign that read, "You had better pick your rut now because you are going to be in it for the next twenty miles." There is nothing that says you are going to be in it for the rest of your

life, and while most of us may detour a little—we get in trouble, and we may be in a rut for a little while—it does not mean we cannot get out of the rut and get on a good, hard highway and make up for the years we were in the rut by getting on that road that leads us to life eternal.

I bear you my testimony, my brethren of the Aaronic Priesthood, that if you will magnify that priesthood and work for its great blessings, even greater blessings will come to you, and then one day will come to pass that which this one sister asked for, "All I want for Christmas is a temple marriage."

May it come to each of us, and may we find joy in assisting these brethren back into activity in the Church, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric. We shall now hear from Elder Clifford E. Young, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Ezra Taft Benson.

## ELDER CLIFFORD E. YOUNG

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My brethren and sisters, you will readily understand that in the interest of time I can only bear my witness to the truth of the messages we have received thus far in this conference. As I have listened this morning, I have been profoundly impressed. I think that it would be a good thing for all of us, after listening to President Clark, if we could become familiar with the manual that our brethren of the Melchizedek Priesthood are using this year. As you doubtless know, we are using *Our Lord of the Gospels*, that splendid book Brother Clark has given to us after years and years of careful study. We are not Bible readers. Here is an opportunity for us in our homes to become such, and I would like to recommend that the members of the families—not only the priesthood—but all the members,

become familiar with this monumental work by reading the Melchizedek Priesthood manual. At first it may appear to be somewhat complicated and involved, but it is not. It is beautiful because of its simplicity, and I am sure all will so regard it if they read it.

Now, to make a comment or two in harmony with what has been said on this occasion: We are celebrating Easter. It is a time when our hearts are turned to our fathers, to our children, to those whom we love who have passed to the other side. I have thought a lot about my colleague, Brother Thomas E. McKay, by whom I have sat for seventeen years. I had a deep affection for him and he for me. We understood each other. This understanding of which I speak is impressively expressed in the *Letters* of Franklin K. Lane published