

the fortitude and ability to stand up like men and bridle our passions and control our lusts and use the sex urges in the manner in which the Lord has ordained that they should be used—which is wholesome and pure and right—if we walk without any form of sex immorality, then we are rising above the animal plane, and we are walking in the realm of spiritual things.

And so it is with every situation in which we find ourselves. If we play cards; if we visit beer halls; if we lie or steal or cheat; if we take advantage of our neighbor for a word; if we oppress the hireling in his wages; if we are immodest in our dress; if we do any of the things that are commonly done by the great masses of ungodly people in the world—we will be living after their manner and certifying that we love the things of the world more than we love the Lord. But on the contrary, if we abide in the truth and keep our covenants and walk in the manner that we were counseled to walk by our President as he opened this conference—and do it consistently, acting uprightly, with integrity and devotion—then we will be putting off the natural man; we will be born again; we will become new creatures of the Holy Ghost. Then it will be our right to have the constant companionship of that member of the

Godhead. And finally, if we endure in faith and in devotion to the end, we will be inheritors of eternal life in the kingdom of God hereafter.

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 spoken to us. The Congregation will now sing, "Praise to the Man," joining the Choruses, under the direction of Alma Dittmer. After the singing, Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin will speak to us.

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The congregation and the Combined Choruses joined in singing the hymn, "Praise to the Man," with Alma Dittmer conducting.

President David O. McKay:

We shall now hear from Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin, Presiding Bishop of the Church. He will be followed by Elder Richard L. Evans.

## BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

### *Presiding Bishop of the Church*

My dear brethren and sisters, I sincerely trust that I might have an interest in your prayers in my behalf. Without prayer, it would be impossible to express one's thoughts and give testimony of the existence of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Church.

Our general conference being held on April 4, 5, and 6 recalls vividly those memorable days of the crucifixion and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words of Paul voice the testimony of each of us when he said,

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (Heb. 13:8.)

As Latter-day Saints, we are particularly interested in two great individuals:

one, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the other, Joseph Smith—the one at the age of twelve, the other at the age of fourteen. Christ visited Jerusalem for the first time with Mary and Joseph, who had gone there to attend the Feast of the Passover and to pay their taxes. When they started homeward, and after one day's travel, they discovered the Christ was not in their company. Returning to Jerusalem, they found him in the temple where he was engaged in discussion with the great men of the day and was, no doubt, telling them of his future assignments and teaching them the gospel that was to be given to the world. Mary and Joseph entered the temple. Mary said, ". . . Son, why

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hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." (Luke 2:48.) Christ then made that marvelous answer, "... How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (*Ibid.*, 2:49.)

Some years later, the Christ sought John the Baptist who was preaching repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, and John impressed those with whom he came in contact, saying that the Christ, "... shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." (Matt. 3:11.)

Christ requested baptism of John,

But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. (*Ibid.*, 3:14-15.)

As Christ came up straightway out of the water, a voice was heard from the heavens saying, "... This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (*Ibid.*, 3:17.)

In requesting baptism of John, Christ recognized that John held the Aaronic Priesthood, the office of a priest.

After the Church was organized, we read in Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." The teachers held the Aaronic Priesthood.

We read in Philippians 1:1 from a statement of the Apostle Paul as follows,

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

It is a great source of inspiration to every member of this Church to know that the Aaronic Priesthood actually existed in the days of the Christ and the apostles. Others were called to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. Elders were called and ordained, as we read in Acts 14:23,

And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

In addition to elders, there were se-

lected seventies receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood, for in Luke 10:1 it states,

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

The Christ was the great high priest. Others were also so blessed, including the apostles. We read in Hebrews 5:1,

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

The history of the New Testament points out definitely the existence of the Aaronic Priesthood, wherein there were deacons, teachers, and priests, and the Melchizedek Priesthood with elders, seventies, and high priests. There stood at the head, the apostles and the bishops, guiding and directing the two priesthoods. The members of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods taught the membership of the Church faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost by those who held the Melchizedek Priesthood. The seventies with the apostles were assigned to preach the gospel to the known world at that time. Those who held the priesthood were directed to be helpful to the poor, teach the membership of the Church to pay their tithing, to observe the Lord's day, not to profane, to be honest, and to attend Sacrament meeting. Again, the New Testament makes it clear that work was being done for the dead, for did not the Apostle Paul say in I Corinthians 15:29,

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

So with both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods, the saints of the Church 2,000 years ago enjoyed the same privileges, divine direction, and inspiration as do the membership of the Church in this day. The Church 2,000 years ago was one of activity and opportunity for services to be rendered by every individual member to assist in building up the kingdom. For again, reading the words of the Apostle James,

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James 2:18.)

After the resurrection of the Christ, there stood as the president of the Church the Apostle Peter, who through divine direction and inspiration continued to teach the gospel and the existence of the Lord Jesus Christ to the people and those not of the faith. To those who were loyal, devoted, true, and active in the gospel, it is said,

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2:9.)

It was Paul who realized there was soon to come about a change in the Church, for did he not declare in II Timothy 4:3-4,

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

He realized that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ would soon be changed from the teachings of the Christ and the apostles to that of individuals who were teaching false doctrine.

Two hundred years later, the gospel had been changed, the priesthood had been taken away, and the earth was left in spiritual darkness; but this was not to exist forever, for John the beloved had said in Revelation 14:6,

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

Two thousand years later, there was a boy at the age of fourteen, Joseph Smith, who lived in Palmyra, New York. Among the churches in Palmyra, New York, was great misunderstanding of the gospel. It was impossible to find the church organization and the priesthood as it existed nearly 2,000 years before. Joseph was very much concerned about the differences of opinion among the

various churches and the doctrines they were teaching. He was one in whose heart was a testimony that in the Bible could be found the answers to his many questions. The statement of James the Apostle gave him the necessary information,

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. (James 1:5-6.)

Joseph followed the admonition given to him by the Apostle James and made it a matter of prayer, asking God where he might find the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. In answer thereto, there appeared the Father and the Son, the first appearance of the Father and the Son since Jesus Christ was upon the earth nearly 2,000 years before. The Lord said to the Prophet Joseph, "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith 2:17.) Instructions to Joseph by the Christ indicated that his Church was not upon the earth, but in time it would be re-established.

There appeared other heavenly beings to the Prophet Joseph, among whom was Moroni, who had lived upon the American continent and had prepared the history of the great events that had taken place in the coming of Lehi and his sons and in the establishment of both the Nephite and Lamanite nations and that Jesus Christ the Son of God actually appeared upon the American continent, established his Church, and organized the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods. Jesus taught the Nephite people the gospel as he had the people in Israel, bestowing upon them the same rights, blessings, and privileges. Moroni also indicated to Joseph that he would receive the gold plates containing the history of America. The gold plates were written in a strange language, which the Prophet Joseph translated, and Oliver Cowdery acted as scribe. In so doing, they came across the manner of baptism, which was not clear to them. They made it a matter of prayer to the Lord, and there appeared a heavenly being who introduced himself as John the Baptist. This event took place on

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May 15, 1829, in Harmony, Pennsylvania. He placed his hands upon the heads of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and uttered these words,

Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness. (D & C 13.)

Through the appearances of the Father and the Son, Moroni, and John the Baptist, the Aaronic Priesthood was restored and placed upon the earth. Some few weeks later, three apostles, Peter, James, and John, appeared and bestowed upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the Melchizedek Priesthood. We can readily see that the Church of Jesus Christ was again restored, organized, and placed upon the earth with both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods, for the salvation, inspiration, and guidance of the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father.

As the Aaronic Priesthood and Melchizedek Priesthood 2,000 years ago had very definite assignments, it is now true that those who hold the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods have the same assignments to teach faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost by those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, fasting, missionary work to preach the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, helping the poor, paying tithing, observing the Lord's day, being honest, attending Sacrament meeting, and doing work for the dead. The Prophet Joseph Smith received a marvelous revelation from the Lord which is recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 2, wherein the membership of the Church were instructed to do work for the dead. The Lord said,

Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers,

and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.

My brethren and sisters, I bear you my testimony that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the organization of the Church with the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods have been restored to the earth through the Prophet Joseph. He actually saw the Father and the Son. Those of us who have the privilege and blessing of membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have very definite responsibilities and assignments, particularly in connection with the marvelous revelation wherein the Lord said,

For I will raise up unto myself a pure people, that will serve me in righteousness;

And all that call upon the name of the Lord, and keep his commandments, shall be saved. (*Ibid.*, 100:16-17.)

This is a definite promise for each and every one of us who is sweet and clean in body and mind, wherein there will come the gift of the Holy Ghost in building up our testimonies and giving us the full understanding of the restored gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition thereto, in our hearts will be that testimony that there stands at the head of the Church an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ as there was 2,000 years ago in the days of Peter, with the same desire to inspire the Saints of today. Peter visited many of the saints, as does our president and apostle today, with the same attitude and feeling with reference to the membership of the Church as Peter had when he said,

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2:9.)

My brethren and sisters, it is wonderful to know that all of us are here enjoying the blessings of the Church and the gospel because we are among those who have literally been called out of darkness into his marvelous light. One hundred years ago, our grandfathers and grandmothers and many of our own fathers and mothers were literally drawn

out of the darkness of the world into the marvelous light of the Lord Jesus Christ through missionaries. Men and women today are accepting the truth and becoming members of his Church. There is no other Church in the world where individuals have as great responsibilities, particularly those who hold the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.

I humbly pray that we shall be worthy to follow in his footsteps and be inspired by the statement of the Christ 2,000 years ago when he said,

... wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin, Presiding Bishop of the Church, has just concluded speaking. Elder Richard L. Evans, a member of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us. Elder Milton R. Hunter will follow Elder Evans.

## ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

President McKay and my brethren and sisters, I acknowledge my need for help in this humbling position and would wish to go back, in these few moments which I have, to the theme set by President McKay yesterday morning and recall as a text and a title:

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. (Rom. 8:6.)

I cannot think of a greater blessing nor anything more earnestly to be sought after than life and peace.

As I have heard the words of life and peace spoken in this conference these past two days, as I have contemplated the ways of life and peace, I have thought inevitably of some voices and faces of the past mingled with those of the present. Those three who most recently have left us have been mentioned a number of times in this conference. I have counted others, especially during the late hours of last night and the early hours of this morning, and have written down some nineteen or twenty names of beloved Brethren with whom I have here sat during some nineteen and a half years, and who have since left this life.

I would read the list, but am afraid I might miss some; but I should like to recall from some of those voices of the past some things that they have said, that they may mingle again with us in the present. (One thing that their having gone impresses upon us is how swiftly the days of life move and how

choice must be the company on the other side where all of us hope eventually to find ourselves in the kingdom of our Father.)

Melvin J. Ballard is one. A printed card which has crossed the desk of some of us these past few days gives these sentences of a paragraph by Brother Ballard:

Man is a child of God, therefore he partakes of the divine nature of his Father. Within him lie germs of infinite development. Potentially he is a godlike being. Therefore he may rise eternally towards the likeness of his Father in heaven. Upward, divine, unending is man's destiny.

I thought of Brother Albert E. Bowen, a choice spirit with a profound mind, and from the last talk he gave at a general conference, I have taken these sentences:

Our religion comprehends more than just the ethical code. It contains a body of principles, through the observance of which we are promised the great reward of eternal life and salvation in the kingdom of God. . . . It all centers in Jesus the Christ. . . . Our religion comprises the teachings and life and actions of Jesus of Nazareth. That constitutes our religion.

I have thought of Brother Matthew Cowley and the last talk he gave here, as I recall, a beautiful talk on prayer:

Some people think it is a sign of weakness to get upon one's knees and pray to our Heavenly Father. It's the greatest sign of strength that exists. No men are greater