

released a vote of appreciation for their many years of meritorious service. All who favor this proposal will please indicate it.

It is proposed that we sustain as the new Superintendent, Joseph T. Bentley.

YOUNG WOMEN'S MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Bertha S. Reeder, President
Emily H. Bennett, First Counselor
LaRue C. Longden, Second Counselor

with all members of the Board as at present constituted.

PRIMARY ASSOCIATION

LaVern W. Parmley, President
Arta M. Hale, First Counselor
Leone W. Doxey, Second Counselor

with all members of the Board as at present constituted.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.:

President McKay, so far as I was able to determine the vote was unanimous in the affirmative on all of the recommendations.

President David O. McKay:

We have just heard President J. Reuben Clark, Jr. of the First Presi-

dency present the General Authorities, General Officers, and General Auxiliary Officers of the Church. We thank you, brethren and sisters, for your unanimous votes in the affirmative. Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Albert Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy.

ELDER DELBERT L. STAPLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters and friends, I should like to express my appreciation for the Brethren sustained among the group of General Authorities with all my heart. I welcome them in these new positions. I know each personally for his faith, devotion, and dedication to the great cause of the Lord. I pledge to them my faith, my prayers, and my help.

This has been a great spiritual conference with choice, enlightening messages. I hope my message will not detract from this sacred day and the important event we commemorate, the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Often in conversation with devout and sincere men not of our faith, the subject of religion routinely comes up as an important and interesting topic for discussion. After answering questions and supplying information about the restored Church of Christ, also following an exchange of doctrinal beliefs, the friendly discussion usually terminates with their saying something like this:

"We are all God's children; therefore, it makes no difference to which church a person belongs; we are all working for the same place." Then, apparently without profound thinking, they add: "There are many roads to get to heaven; therefore, it does not matter which road we take, we will all end up in God's presence."

This man-made philosophy—for such it is—sounds good, but the scriptures do not support it. I assure each of you that the road to God's presence is not that easy. I feel certain that the devil chuckles whenever this false opinion is expressed, for it pleases him that the minds of men have been so blinded to revealed truth by his cunning craftiness and deceit that they will believe any religion to be acceptable to God regardless of its tenets and ordinances or how or by whom those ordinances are administered.

Occasionally, to justify or bolster their Christian belief and church allegiance, men will simply say, "We admire

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your church, but you agree, do you not, that although of different faiths we are all striving for the same goals?" True, we are, but to me this statement evidences an uncertainty and lack of personal assurance of the rightness of their convictions and church membership, because the conversation had neither solicited nor suggested any explanation of their religious choice.

Recently a father wrote an unchristianlike letter to his son, who, after prayerful study, gave up the church of his parents, in which he had been most active, to join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The father, apparently suffering from a vain and injured false pride, used this argument as one of many, which were most unfair and bitter, in order to win his son back to the church of his youth and young manhood: (I quote from his letter.) "My father often told us that if we lived by God's Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule every minute that we were awake, we would have all the religion we needed to live a good, wholesome, and righteous life on this earth, thereby pleasing God and reaping our rewards in heaven." And then he quoted a noted evangelist of our day as saying, "There is no true church," and the father added, "I believe the same."

No one will deny the everlasting importance of the Ten Commandments. They are as binding today upon mankind as they were at the time God gave them to Moses upon Mount Sinai. Also, the Golden Rule today is basic to our Christian way of life. However, this father, like so many others, is blinded in his concept of what true religion is and what it requires of an individual. Many people, no doubt, would agree with the statement attributed to the evangelist, that there is "no true church." Many others would not be certain because of the confusion caused by so many churches all claiming to be right. I testify in all sincerity and humility that the true Church of Christ is upon the earth, and every person, in the interest of his salvation and exaltation, is duty bound to find it and to obey its way of life.

A few months ago I saw a large 1957 calendar hanging on a church wall with this caption in bold letters, challenging

all who looked upon it to "Go to Church Sunday," followed with this message: "I'll go to my Church, you go to yours, but let us walk together." How can people going to different churches of divergent faiths, doctrines, and tenets, walk together in understanding and peace when they disagree on basic Christian principles and true gospel teachings and faith concepts? Does not walking together imply agreement, unity of faith, and oneness of purpose?

The Lord, reasoning with the children of Israel because of their waywardness and failure to follow the prophets, declared to them through the Prophet Amos:

You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? (Amos 3:2-3.)

A great and important lesson is taught in this scripture; namely, that we should walk together, agreed in faith and doctrine with the Lord. Is not that admonition and counsel just as applicable today to the people of the world as it was in the days of the Prophet Amos?

It was the Apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesian saints, who taught the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" doctrine, and also testified to them that Christ . . . gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; . . ." (Eph. 4:11-14.)

These officers, since the days of Christ, are and always will be in the true Church of Christ as long as the earth shall stand.

With the multiplicity of churches in the world today all claiming the right way, and so many yielding to the generally accepted opinion that all roads or churches lead to eternal life, how important it is that these officers of the

true Church of Christ, enumerated by the Apostle Paul, reveal light and truth in the midst of confusion and darkness of teaching, to guide mankind unerringly to the safe harbor of God's everlasting kingdom.

If truth is consistent, and I testify it is, can there be more than one true way to God and eternal life? The Savior said to the Jews who believed on him:

... If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free. (John 8:31-32.)

A man cannot truly be free who is handicapped by false tradition, false teachings, error, and a lack of true knowledge that saves.

Among the eternal truths taught by our Redeemer in his great Sermon on the Mount is this important and challenging obligation: "... seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; ..." (Matt. 6:33.) The Lord specified a certain kingdom, not many kingdoms or any kingdom, but only God's kingdom. It is the gospel of this kingdom that the Lord declared, when outlining the signs and events that would precede his second coming, was to be preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations before the end should come. (See *ibid.*, 24:14.) The duty, therefore, of every man is to search honestly and sincerely in faith until he finds God's kingdom and yields obedience to its full requirements.

When Thomas asked the Lord, "... how can we know the way?" the Savior answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:5-6.) Thomas did not ask his Lord what different ways could be chosen or taken, nor did the Savior reveal more than one way or plan by which eternal life can be obtained. He presented the plan he received from his Father, for he declared:

"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (*Ibid.*, 7:16-17.)

When Christ ministered among men, he did not accept the sects of the Phari-

sees and Sadducees, but admonished his listeners to beware of their doctrine. (Matt. 16:12.) He called them blind guides and referred to them, with the scribes, as hypocrites who built the tombs of the prophets; ... compared them unto whited sepulchres and said they omitted the weightier matters of the law. (*Ibid.*, 23:23-31.) The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of man, but the Sadducees did not accept this doctrinal belief. Both could not be right.

Just as the Judah kingdom of the house of Israel had departed from the right way into error and apostasy because of tradition and false teachings, even so today many people are in spiritual darkness because they do not have the light of truth found in the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was not the purpose and calling of Christ's apostles anciently to convert and permit people to join any church, but only the true church that Christ had established among men. The Apostle Paul, addressing himself to the Corinthian saints, warned them by saying:

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (I Cor. 1:10.)

He then calls attention to reports that there were contentions among them and asks, "Is Christ divided?" Later in this same epistle he refers to himself as a wise master-builder and states:

... I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (*Ibid.*, 3:10-11, 13.)

Writing to the Galatian saints, Paul was just as emphatic. He said to them:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Which is not another; but there be some

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that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Doesn't this statement describe religious conditions in our day and time? Paul continued by declaring:

But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

And then to re-emphasize it, Paul repeated:

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Gal. 1:6-9.)

Does not this scripture clearly reveal that there is only one true gospel plan?

Luke, the physician, recording the historic events that occurred on the Day of Pentecost, proudly relates:

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: . . .

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, . . .

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. (Acts 2:41-42; 4:32.)

When Jesus was taken before Pilate to be judged of him, he said to Pilate, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.)

Again, when he was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication, he answered certain Jews who gathered about him wanting to know if he was the Christ, by saying,

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life. . . . (Ibid., 10:27-28.)

How can people truly hear and know the voice of their Shepherd and become so confused in understanding his teachings and doctrines that they divide into many denominations of divergent beliefs and practices? Can they follow him by branching off into different directions contrary to the path Jesus marked out for them?

The Savior authoritatively taught: ". . . there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (Ibid., 10:16.) He did not suggest there were to be many folds and many shepherds in his kingdom.

Alma, a great prophet of ancient America, declared:

Behold, I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ; and if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd, to the name by which ye are called, behold, ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd.

And now if ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd, of what fold are ye? Behold, I say unto you, that the devil is your shepherd, and ye are of his fold; and now, who can deny this? Behold, I say unto you, whosoever denieth this is a liar and a child of the devil. (Alma 5:38-39.)

In this world of many churches with their diversity of beliefs and teachings, can they all be right and enjoy true authority of ministry? The scriptures teach that God is consistent and unchangeable, that his kingdom is one of order, not chaos. If the scriptures are interpreted according to the light of truth, there is only one path to God, not many. A kingdom divided against itself will fall and become desolate. The laws of God and the requirements for entrance into his kingdom are the same for all. Even the governments of men do not permit a variety of plans by which people can obtain citizenship; the requirements apply to all alike. Can we think of God's kingdom advocating many different ways to salvation and glory to suit the fancy of men? Sincerity of belief is not enough and cannot save any man. Exaltation is founded upon true faith and good works, for it is by works that faith is made perfect.

The Savior asked this thought-provoking question: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) He also taught: "The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master." (Ibid., 6:40.) If we are not above our master, then we are obligated to do the things that he did to obtain eternal life. We cannot follow a different course of teachings and beliefs and rest securely with him in the kingdom of our Father. Christ said he came not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him. He also advocated, "Come follow me." To do so would lead us into the waters of baptism, even as Christ was baptized, and by one

who has the authority to perform that sacred ordinance. John the Baptist was divinely commissioned and sent from the Father to baptize his Lord and Redeemer.

The Savior taught:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. (John 10:1.)

Every seeker after truth should searchingly and honestly ask himself or herself this question: Am I attempting to climb heavenward by some other path than the one marked out by the Redeemer and Savior of men?

Another important saying of the Savior in his discourse upon the mount that significantly applies to one Lord, one faith, one baptism, is this:

Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils: and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matt. 7:21-23.)

If God's children close their minds and hearts to truth and refuse to obey the saving ordinances of the true kingdom of God and thus fail to obtain rightful citizenship in it, this will place the disobedient in that group of iniquity workers that the Lord will refuse to recognize at his coming. Our Savior has warned that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. (*Ibid.*, 7:19.)

John the Beloved reasoned wisely and correctly when he taught:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. (1 John 2:3-6.)

If all people walked as Christ walked, guided by the Holy Ghost, which is the spirit of truth, they would accept and follow his teachings and do the things which he did. This would unite them in one fold under the leadership of the true Shepherd, Christ our Lord.

In the midst of present-day religious confusion, false teachings, and questionable faith in the true purposes and power of God, it is most difficult, without honest effort and sincere searching, to find Christ's kingdom with its plan of life and salvation. Fortunately for us, God has not left mankind alone in this world of uncertainty, but has promised the guidance of his spirit to enlighten the understanding of his children upon the earth with truth and light if they will faithfully and prayerfully seek after him.

I testify to you, my brothers and sisters and friends, that there is only one true gospel plan, of which our Savior is the author, that embodies all the teachings, principles, and ordinances revealed for the salvation and exaltation of mankind. I testify also that there can be only one true kingdom of God on earth with the authority and power to teach and administer the sacred gospel ordinances for the blessing of the human family.

May God grant that through the restoration of his kingdom in this, the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, his will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, as our Savior taught us to pray, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Will Elder Hugh B. Brown please take his place with the Twelve, and will Brother Gordon B. Hinckley come forward and take his place among the Assistants to the Twelve, also Brother Henry D. Taylor.

We shall now hear from Elder Albert Theodore Tuttle, whom you have just sustained as one of the First Council of Seventy of the Church.