

with a mystical character. I am not sure that I know just what is contemplated by "mystical." He is not mystical to me, nor to the great body of his followers with which I have the honor to be associated. It is true that he does not move about among us in the form in which he once presented himself to humanity, but he is real. He was resurrected in the form in which he was crucified, and he lives in the heavens he has described. He will return as he has promised, and in the meantime he has left an organization which he established through his commissioned servants, in fulfilment of prophecy, to build his kingdom and prepare the way for his coming. I hope that they who profess to love and adore him will not make him less than he himself said that he was—the Son of the Father, on the right hand of God, Lord, Lawgiver, and Judge of all men in the earth, invested with powers and authorities everlasting.

So, it is the worship of our Lord so interpreted, it is the acceptance of his revealed and restored gospel, and that alone, which will adequately and perpetually satisfy the "hunger for religion," which I sincerely hope pervades the world today. Christ has been seen in modern times. There are creditable witnesses whose testimony has never been successfully refuted to two such appearances—first, when he appeared to the young prophet, Joseph Smith, in answer to prayer, accompanying his Father, the Eternal God. This heavenly vision, without argument, brought to the world an irrefutable and true concept of the Father and the Son. Then he appeared to this same prophet with an associate when he was more mature

in a temple which had been erected to his name. This is the testimony of that appearance:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." (D & C 76:22-24.)

Every fiber of my being responds to that testimony. I am completely convinced that the men who bore the testimony told the truth. Every interpretative sense which I possess tells me without doubt or equivocation that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lives as a resurrected eternal being, and that he is my Lord and my Savior, and the Lord of all men. I could wish for no greater happiness, peace, and satisfaction to come to all our friends than that they should enjoy the blessing, the incomparable blessing, of this knowledge and assurance.

May the world come to peace and happiness through the recognition of the true Christ, I ask humbly in his name. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency of the Church has just spoken to us. Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley.

## ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

My brethren and sisters, I hope that the few words I attempt may be directed by the Spirit of God, and that perchance they may be helpful to us and give us courage in the efforts that we are making to carry forward the work of God.

I am happy to be here today and

listen to these fine sisters sing as they did Wednesday when I attended the meetings of the Relief Society, where I always gain a wonderful respect for the women of the Church, and the effort they are putting forth to further the work of God.

I want to bear my testimony to the

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truth of all that we have listened to this morning from President Richards. As I look forward and see this great number of men, many of whose faces are not familiar to me but many of them are, and when I try to figure in my mind the responsibility that rests upon them individually and collectively as the bearers of the priesthood, I wonder how I could make that plain, what words it would take to impress upon us all the dignity and responsibility of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

I presume that all of us who are here today believe the things that President Richards has told us, that we believe that Jesus Christ is actually the Son of God. He told Peter that upon that testimony that he is, he would build his Church. I hope we have, as I have said more than once from this pulpit, the testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, for as long as we do, and live true to it, no danger will ever befall the Church.

I believe in the verity of the story of the Prophet Joseph Smith, that Christ appeared to him and gave him a commission, and that true to that commission he was finally authorized and empowered to reorganize the Church of Jesus Christ; that through the revelations which have come to us through him we have a true conception of the purpose of life and of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I believe, moreover, that the priesthood was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith and that it has come down to us in an unbroken line, authoritative, and that only through the operation of that priesthood can the ordinances which are designed for the exaltation of men and women be performed in their behalf.

Now, this being true, this being the testimony of all who are here today, as I presume it is, then we have a real responsibility, and I stand before you today representing a group of men in the priesthood whose major purpose it is to bear that testimony to the world—the seventies of the Church. It happens, however, that in carrying that message to the world, we avail ourselves of men who have not yet been ordained seventies and of sisters in the Church, and also we use men who have perhaps

been through the order of the seventy and become high priests, or at any rate who are high priests. So we have a large force of men whom we use to spread this knowledge of the gospel to the peoples of the world. The largest part of these male missionaries is made up of the elders of the Church and many of them of rather limited experience.

It is the duty of the older members, the fathers, uncles, grandfathers, cousins, and so forth, who have this testimony in their hearts, to establish it in the hearts of these growing young men, so that at such time as they may come to us and offer their services that they may have a living testimony that Christ is the Son of God, that the Church was authoritatively organized, that the priesthood is in the earth, all of which is essential to the exaltation of men.

If every elder who goes into the mission field could go with that testimony, he would be a power of strength and vigor, and his example would be above reproach as he labors among the people of the world.

Now, who is going to impress these young people with this and how are we going to do it? We all have that responsibility whether we be fathers of these young men, or relatives, or just friends and acquaintances, or even strangers; when occasion may permit, we have the responsibility of striving to instil in their hearts a firm and living testimony of the truth of these things.

It happens, occasionally, that young men go out who cannot say they know it. Sister Ivins and I were on a train one time with a group going into the Central Atlantic States Mission. A very outstanding young man was in that party. In the testimony meeting that we held in Roanoke the night of our arrival, he said, "I cannot tell you definitely that I know the gospel is true." But he believed it, and he sought that testimony. I think it was about ten days or two weeks later, that we met him again in a testimony meeting. Then with all the fervor that one could ask for, he bore testimony to the truth of the gospel.

"If any man will do his will, he shall

know of the doctrine. . . ." (John 7:17) the Savior said; and this elder had found it out. Perhaps it would have been a bit better had he had that testimony in his heart as he accepted his call for missionary service.

It has been a long time since I first sat on the missionary committee with President McKay, who was a Counselor then to President Grant, and after him with President Richards. We have seen many, many men come to us for interview and go into the mission field. It is my testimony that most of them, brethren and sisters, are worthy of the call that is given them. Occasionally, however, we have problems with some of them, and the problems frequently arise because, either they have not been properly taught or, having been taught, they have been a bit adverse and felt that they were being circumscribed in their liberties.

We must not let them feel that way, brethren and sisters. We must build in them a love for the Church and the gospel of Jesus Christ, and we must present to them an attitude not of criticism of the operation of the Church, but of approval, the testimony that there is actually today among the leaders of the Church inspiration.

I have lived in this Church a long time, and since I was eight years old I have been a baptized member of the Church, and I have seen some of its practices change. I cannot remember ever hearing of a change of the doctrine of the Church, but it has been possible to change some things. I remember when the Mutual Improvement Association came to St. George in its, shall I say, primeval condition, and I have watched it change its policies and practices, always for the better.

There are some people who feel that there never ought to be a change of that kind in the Church, but it happens.

I bear testimony, too, that those changes in my opinion have been inspired. But there are some of us who feel that we cannot accept those things. We have no right, brethren and sisters, to teach our young, growing people that it should not have been done.

I remember meeting a boy years ago

out in Shreveport, who came from a family that was divided in that respect, a mother that was firm in her faith, a father that had an idea that certain things should not have been changed, and I found that boy following the line of thinking which his father had instilled in his heart. Repeated promises on his part to refrain from worrying his companions with those teachings failed.

Now, brethren and sisters, these are serious conditions, and who is responsible for them when they exist in the hearts of boys and girls? Somebody, and usually somebody who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood, is responsible for it, brethren and sisters. We have that great obligation to build faith in the leadership of the Church, faith in the revelations of God to guide this Church, and when we fail to do it, perhaps there will come a time when we may answer for our failure.

I think that is one of our greatest responsibilities, today, brethren and sisters—to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in our homes, in our families, in our ministry among the people, in our business relationships, so that growing men and women can see the results that may come from an inspired testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that the gospel has been restored, that as has been said this morning, the Church is the custodian of the priesthood and that we have the responsibility of carrying this message to the world.

We are happy, brethren and sisters, in the contributions you are making of the services of your sons and daughters. They are coming to us in great numbers and most of them are eminently worthy. When they come to me, I hope you will have taught them that they must not be afraid to tell the truth as some of them say they are. We have nothing but good will toward those young people. Our sole and only purpose is to help them to see as they should see, to live as they should live, and to serve as they should serve; and may God bless us all with the power to so impress these young people with the truth of these grand and glorious teachings, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.