

Friday, October 10

First Day

They criticize the doctrines of the Church, and these weak members do not have understanding enough, information enough, and enough of the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord to resist the false doctrines and teachings of those who come to them, the wolves in sheep's clothing, and they listen to them, and think that perhaps after all they have made a mistake, and first thing you know they find their way out of the Church, because they do not have understanding.

I get letters frequently from people, members of this Church, who have been disturbed principally by two organizations which seem to have dedicated their lives to the destruction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These people go into the homes of our weak members, disturb them in their faith, get them all riled up, and they do not know whether they did the right thing when they were baptized or whether they did not; but if they had lived as they should and had received the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they would not be moved. They would not be influenced by the false teachings and false statements regarding our doctrines that these people present to them.

The gospel is simple. There is nothing difficult about it. There are mysteries, no doubt. We do not need to bother about the mysteries, but the simple things pertaining to our salvation and exaltation we can understand.

Now let me refer to another passage of scripture.

"But ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, who giveth liberally; and that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be

seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils." (*Ibid.*, 46:7.)

So the Lord has given us a warning. "Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given;

"For verily I say unto you, they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a sign that they may consume it upon their lusts.

"And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are, that are given unto the church." (*Ibid.*, 46:8-10.)

Now the Lord would give us gifts. He will quicken our minds. He will give us knowledge that will clear up all difficulties, and put us in harmony with the commandments that he has given us, and with a knowledge that will be so deeply rooted in our souls that the knowledge can never be rooted out, if we will just seek for the light and the truth and the understanding which is promised to us, and which we can receive if we will only be true and faithful to every covenant and obligation pertaining to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Lord bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Council of the Twelve. We will now hear from Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church. He will be followed by Elder Alma Sonne.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

I pray that the spirit of the Lord will be with me, and that I may have his inspiration as has been given to others in this conference.

I noticed in an article on the editorial page of the *News* last evening, calling

our attention to the troubled world we are in. Have you had any problems? Have you had any difficulties? Have you had any trials? Have you ever been discouraged? Have you had any heartaches? Have you ever felt that

missionary system could not operate as it does today. Without his blessings temples could not be erected at home and abroad as at present. And without his blessings we could not sustain upwards of five thousand missionaries in the field to proclaim the gospel truths. Neither could we build the churches and support the schools and places of education which have been developed in our midst.

I feel sure, as I stand here, that God's work will not diminish in the earth. Eventually every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is the Christ. The adversary, powerful as he is in the world today, will be defeated in his plans and in his purposes. The end of evil, so rampant in the world, will come when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached as a witness in all the world and when the power of Satan is broken.

The Church stands for the principles of eternal truth proclaimed by Jesus Christ and the holy prophets. The appointed mission of the Church is to preach the gospel and to administer the ordinances thereof. The work is going forward today, at home and abroad, and we have reason, you and I, to rejoice at its success; and so I say, again, God's work will not diminish in the world or in the Church, it will continue its onward course. It has survived attacks from without and crises and threats from within, but it has never weakened. It is full of vitality and power.

The large gathering of Latter-day Saints here and in other places, the recent expansion and the enlarged projects now under way, are evidences of virility and strength. The work being done is destined to conquer and to touch the human heart and even where Christian sentiments are still slumbering.

I was interested this morning when Elder Hinckley read from Section 122 of the Doctrine and Covenants. They were words of reassurance to the Prophet Joseph Smith. They came at a moment when he needed to be reassured, when he was being maligned, betrayed, and imprisoned. They were given to him in Liberty Jail where he received words of comfort and strength from his Heav-

enly Father. Few men have discharged their responsibility with greater confidence and a firmer trust in God than did Joseph Smith. I marvel as I contemplate the soundness of his program and the durability of his teachings.

I recall the words of the Savior about John the Baptist. He said:

"What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

"... A man clothed in soft raiment?" (Matt. 11:7-8.) They went out to see a man who had been true to his calling, a spiritual giant, a great prophet.

You may rest assured that no worldly allurements could swerve him from his sacred calling. When you find a man who discharges his obligations to God, first and foremost, you will find a strong man, an unconquerable spirit, not a reed shaken by the wind. He is not swayed by popular motives nor by passing currents. He stands on a foundation that will never give way.

When you find a group of men and women similarly endowed, devoted to a God-given trust, counseling together and working for a divine cause in the service of God, you will find an invincible community struggling and striving for the betterment of all.

In the year 1831, the Latter-day Saints gathered in Kirtland, Ohio. They were poor from the standpoint of worldly possessions, but they had been taught correct principles of government. They lived in peace. They were united in their common cause. Within the short period of five years they had built homes for themselves, they had made civic improvements, and they had built a temple which cost them \$75,000. It was a stupendous sum in those days, yet economically, they were on a par with their neighbors and friends.

The year following the settlement in Kirtland a part of the Church settled in Jackson County, Missouri. What they accomplished there within a year or two incited the hatred and envy of their neighbors. A series of persecutions commenced which resulted in the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints. They were driven from their homes and despoiled of their property.

They moved into the counties northward.

In 1838, according to Church history, four years after being driven from Jackson County, there were in Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri, one hundred fifty dwellings, seven stores, six blacksmith shops, two hotels, and a printing house prepared to issue a Church periodical. Schoolhouses were erected, and homes had been built in the country round about. The exodus from Missouri to Illinois with its suffering, exposure, hardship, and trial, has few parallels in history.

The destination of the people was a bog which had to be reclaimed to make it fit for human habitation. This was in 1839. And in 1844, five years later, the population of their city had reached 20,000. Did the Lord bless the Latter-day Saints in those early days? These refugees built comfortable homes, public buildings, schools, and a temple which cost the enormous sum of one million dollars. How could they accomplish this thing? All of this, as you know, they abandoned and left to their enemies so the Latter-day Saints could worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. They wanted to be free from persecution and malice.

The next movement was to the Rocky Mountains, beyond the confines of civilization in the great unexplored West. The Salt Lake Basin was at that time regarded as an irredeemable waste. What has happened in this intermountain region, you already know. The desert has blossomed as a rose. The climate has been tempered. Miracles have been wrought and the precious things of the earth are coming to light.

I mention these things, brethren and sisters, not to bring up the past but to point out the constructive spirit of the Mormon faith. I conclude that any

worthy project which will enhance God's work can be accomplished by the Latter-day Saints—for God's work will not fail. It will triumph in the world beyond the wildest dreams of those who laid so firmly the foundation of all we have and are. The same authority which actuated and inspired Joseph Smith and Brigham Young is directing the present leaders of the Church today. I know this to be a fact.

I know God is with his people. I know his inspiration is resting upon those who are directing its affairs, and I know God's work will triumph in the earth and the Latter-day Saints will carry forward the great program successfully until it is fully realized, for God is still blessing his people.

May we always remember it and may we live worthily before him so that these blessings can come to all of us, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. The Congregation will now join in singing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints." Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen will lead us. After the singing, Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy will address us.

The congregation and the Relief Society Singing Mothers Chorus joined in singing the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin.

ELDER MILTON R. HUNTER

Of the First Council of the Seventy

In this morning's session of the conference, President Stephen L. Richards stated that Isaiah prophesied that in the last days the Lord would establish "a marvelous work and a wonder" among

the children of men. In connection with that marvelous work and a wonder, Isaiah said:

"And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and