

May you be able to accept without undue criticism and faultfinding the program—an inspired program—which is for the benefit and upbuilding of the people, is the humble prayer I offer, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Romney, will you please come forward. He to whom we have just listened is Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy. Brother Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Brethren and sisters: I ask you to join your faith and prayers with mine, that what I say will be in harmony with what has already been said. What I have been thinking about is, I believe in harmony with President Clark's great message. I pray that I may have the Spirit of the Lord as I speak.

To suggest what I have in mind to say, I quote these words which Jesus spake to the unbelieving Jews: ". . . if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24.)

I should like to direct my remarks particularly to this great group of singers here in the choir from Brigham Young University, and to all other students—students who are challenged by the wonders of the universe, and who want to learn more about them, and at the same time prove faithful and true to the faith of their parents.

Such a student returning from a celebrated eastern university recently said in substance: "Some of my fellow students are apparently as well off as we are. They seemingly observe our standards with respect to chastity, Word of Wisdom, clean speech, and have lofty ideals. What do we have which they do not have? If there is a difference between us just what is it?"

A little reflection, I believe, will suggest a number of differences, but the one I wish to emphasize this morning is our beliefs and faith in Jesus Christ—not our belief that there is a God, but rather our peculiar concept about his nature and identity, and our relationship to him. It is when we descend to particulars that the differences show up. As a matter of fact, it seems that belief in the existence of a God is almost universal. Thinking people everywhere, particularly scientists, are

accepting the hypothesis that there is a God who created and is now controlling the universe. The materialistic concept which denies God altogether is being replaced with the theory set forth by the late French scientist, Dr. Pierre Lecomte du Nouy, in his great book, *Human Destiny*. His thesis is that there is "an idea, a transcendent will, a supreme intelligence," an "anti-chance" sustaining the universe. This supreme intelligence he calls God.

Aroused by what he terms "the universal demoralization" and loss of faith which has resulted from "paralyzing skepticism and destructive materialism," he examines "critically the scientific capital accumulated by man": and derives "therefrom logical and rational consequences" which to him and many other eminent scientists "lead inevitably to the idea of God." The existence of such a Being is, he concludes, a scientific fact. It is his hope that the acceptance of his thesis will supply men with a basis, and give them a motive which will sustain faith in God and in the high destiny of man—a faith which will keep men struggling to reach the moral and spiritual plane exemplified by Jesus. "Men must be made to understand," he says, "that the important thing is to develop what is within them, to purify themselves, to better themselves, to come closer to the perfect ideal which is Christ."

Now, of course, we believe with him that there is a God who is the Creator and ruler of the universe. His statement that God's purpose is to bring men "closer to the perfect ideal which is Christ" is, when interpreted in the light of our belief in Jesus, in harmony with the Lord's declaration that ". . . this is my work and my glory—to bring

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to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) However, we do not see eye to eye with him as to the nature of that perfection, nor as to the process by which it may be attained. Our differences on these matters arise from our incompatible beliefs about the nature and the identity of God and Jesus, and our relationship to them. A comparison of these beliefs will point up the differences. As to his beliefs, we will let him speak for himself. First, as to God:

"Any effort to visualize God," he says, "reveals a surprising childishness. We can no more conceive Him than we can conceive an electron." And again, ". . . the idea of God is a pure idea, like the idea of force, or of energy, and does not need to be visualized: nor can it be. . . ." And finally: "When we were led to call on an external action so as to account for the birth of life and the development of evolution, we admitted that the only possible, logical interpretation coincided with that which recognized the existence of God. And . . . we were driven, in order to explain the universe and evolution, to accept the idea. . . . However, we were careful not to define the attributes of this force, which evidently corresponds to the admitted idea of God. We, therefore, used the consecrated name, but avoided as much as possible any anthropomorphic idea."

Now of course this is not our concept of God. But I think we should respect this scientist's desire to establish a scientific basis for faith in God. He did the best he could with the light under which he worked. We will not be disturbed nor disappointed by his conclusion if we keep in mind the fact that the truth about Deity does not lie within the range of scientific research nor philosophical interpretation, but rather in the field of direct revelation.

As to his concept of Jesus he says: ". . . let us not forget that the perfect man is not a myth; he has existed, in the person of Jesus," who he says "can be assimilated," [that is, likened or compared] "to one of the intermediary . . . forms, perhaps a million years in advance of evolution."

Because they are familiar to most of us I shall not here review in detail our

beliefs about Jesus. President Clark set them forth with much clarity this morning. But I do submit to you that these postulated concepts of God and Jesus omit every essential aspect of the divine Redeemer whom we worship. They rule out his and our pre-existence, his divine Sonship, the fall of Adam, and Christ's atonement, Christ's and our resurrection, his past, present, and future role in the courts on high, and our eternal progress and destiny in the world to come.

I repeat that in our peculiar beliefs and faith in Jesus Christ, comprising the foregoing and other revealed truths concerning him, we greatly differ from other people of the earth.

But does it make any difference which beliefs men accept? Remembering that Jesus said a tree may be known by its fruit, let us look at this question for just a moment. One of the fruits of the foregoing conceptions of Jesus is that the good life which he projected may be attained by accepting and applying his so-called "ethical and moral teachings" such as those expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, while at the same time denying his divinity and ridiculing the fundamental doctrines of his gospel. Here is a quotation from one of the most ardent proponents of this theory.

"What was Jesus' ancestry? Was He a descendant of Joseph and Mary, or of God and Mary? He was a descendant of Joseph and Mary. He was the most perfect human being who ever lived, but He was not the Son of God." And further, "belief in . . . , the Virgin Mary, the atonement, trinity, etc., will not help to make a better world, but belief in the fundamentals of Jesus' democracy and the social values named in the Sermon on the Mount will." (*The Good Society*, by Willis, p. 58.)

Now I submit to you that all history, including the present state of world affairs, testifies that the fruits of the teachings of Jesus Christ cannot be had by accepting some of his teachings, rejecting the rest, and denying his divinity. Of all the world's ills, none is more tragic than the denial of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by so many people who profess to believe in him.

Another fruit of the supreme intelligence theory is that God set a goal for man, but "did not prescribe the means" by which that goal may be attained. This was left, so the theory runs, for man to discover by trial and error. Such a doctrine is the antithesis of our knowledge that Jesus Christ prescribed the exact course by which men may come to the perfection he enjoined.

"He marked the path and led the way,
And ev'ry point defines,
To light and life and endless day,
Where God's full presence shines."

(Eliza R. Snow)

Now to come directly to the point of these remarks, let us consider the fruits of believing Jesus to be what he claimed to be—the literal Son of God in the spirit and in the flesh; the revelation of God to man, the Redeemer, our advocate with the Father. What does such a belief do for one?

Speaking generally, it becomes the motivating force in one's life. Specifically, it induces one to render obedience to the initiatory principles and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is, to have faith in Jesus, to repent, to be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, and to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Wholehearted obedience to these purifying and sanctifying principles and ordinances works in the life of the true believer a far-reaching miracle. For one thing, it confers upon him membership in the literal kingdom of God, identifying him as a sheep of the true Shepherd.

Through obedience to these principles and ordinances there is introduced into one's life a new light, a light which conveys to his mind, and opens his understanding to, "... pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul, ..." (See D&C 121:42.) Such an one is in a real sense readmitted into the presence of God. The direct line of communication from God to him is reopened. By this he is sustained in his belief in Jesus Christ with an assurance beyond the understanding of the uninitiated.

This great source of pure knowledge, wisdom, light, and intelligence is, of

course, the Holy Ghost who the Savior said would lead men into all truth. To understand and appreciate this great gift it must be experienced. But I bear you witness that it is real and will work a miracle in your understanding. You will remember that without it Peter denied Jesus on the night of his great trial. Possessing it, Peter and John defied their captors, (although those captors had the power to put them to death and in a sense had the disposition to do so) with this declaration: "... whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19-20.) While one enjoys this gift, his belief in Jesus Christ is secure.

Now, the third effect of complying with these principles of the gospel is forgiveness of sins. This is in itself a mighty miracle. Sin is wickedness and "... wickedness never was happiness." (Alma 41:10.)

Most of the suffering and distress endured by people of this earth is the result of unrepented and unremitted sin. Paul spoke two universal truths when he said to the Romans, "... the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23.) Just as suffering and sorrow attend sin, so happiness and joy attend forgiveness of sins.

Alma said of his suffering for sin, "... there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains," and then, speaking of the joy which came to him when, through repentance, he had received forgiveness, he said, "Yea, and again I say unto you, ... that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy." (Alma 36:21.)

Forgiveness of sins is prerequisite to a full fellowship in the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a prerequisite to enjoying the gift of the Holy Ghost. As a matter of fact every blessing of the gospel of Jesus Christ is predicated upon receiving forgiveness of sins; for, as Jesus said, "... no unclean thing can enter into his [God's] kingdom; therefore, nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their

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garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end." (3 Nephi 27:19.) Then he added: "Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me [that is, believe on me] and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day." (3 Nephi 27:20.)

In this statement Jesus Christ gave the only prescription there is for obtaining forgiveness of sins, and, therefore, the only way to happiness, the only way to a pure knowledge of God our Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. The following of this prescription depends wholly upon one's belief in Jesus Christ.

I sincerely pray that should the questions arise as to, "What do we have which others do not have?" we will remember and try to understand the eternal truths implied in Jesus' statement to the unbelieving Jews, ". . . if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24.)

ELDER ELRAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I pray humbly, my brothers and sisters, that what I shall say may be appropriate. I have been so uplifted by that which has already been spoken from this pulpit this morning, that my heart is filled with gratitude for the goodness and blessings of the Lord, especially for the absolute testimony that I have of his divinity.

Almost two thousand years ago he said, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24.) And again he said, "Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again.

"And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple." (D&C 103:27-28.)

We can place ourselves in either category we wish.

In my opinion, one of the noblest expressions of unselfish devotion and a

God grant that each of us may escape such a death by believing with Peter that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," I humbly pray in his name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve has just concluded speaking. The Chorus and Congregation will now join in singing, "How Firm a Foundation," conducted by Elder Norman Gulbrandsen. After the singing Elder ElRay L. Christiansen will speak.

The congregation and the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses joined in singing the hymn, "How Firm A Foundation."

President David O. McKay:

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Bishop Wirthin.

willingness to give of one's self is found in missionary work. We believe that every Latter-day Saint who has the capacity to so do carries the obligation to share with others the truth of the restored gospel. The depth of this belief is adequately demonstrated by the more than ten thousand missionaries at home and abroad, full time and part time according to their calls, who are serving at their own expense in the missions of the world and in the stake missions.

They answer the calls to serve without equivocation or hesitancy. It matters not one whit to which land or country or clime they may be assigned, even though it might require the learning of a new and difficult language; even though it requires personal sacrifice for him or his family or both, he goes forth and figuratively loses his life for that period of time in the hope that he may bring to *others* a newness of life and