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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 Wirthlin.

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

hope and understanding—which may lead to salvation.

Missionary service is not only a test of faith but a real test of character. This is seen in the remarks of a young missionary who said: "In the Army I was forced to obey orders, but in the mission field I am given instructions and then placed on my honor. This has been to me one of the greatest tests in my life—"

Although a few months have passed since we visited your sons and daughters in the ten missions of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, North Germany, West Germany, Swiss-Austria, France, and Great Britain, I wish to fulfil a promise and bring the greetings, not only of the missionaries, the mission presidents and their devoted wives, but also of many of the faithful members in the fourteen countries that comprise those missions.

In addition to our meetings with the missionaries in report and testimony meetings, I had the privilege of interviewing practically all of the nearly twelve hundred who are laboring in those various missions. It was an arduous undertaking, but it was compensating and worth while to look into their handsome faces across a table and inquire about their work, their thinking, and their faith, their living, and to ask about their parents at home and to receive almost without exception the assurance that they are living clean lives, that they are doing well as ambassadors of truth, that they know the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it has been restored, is true. Not only can you be proud of them but they, too, are proud of you, their families at home, and have deep concern about you.

One young missionary from Canada reported: "My greatest moment came this morning. You see, my father is a baptized member, but he is inactive. He was not in favor of my coming on this mission, but this morning I received a Christmas card from him on which he wrote, 'I am proud of you, my son, and I wish you success on your mission.' This has been the best Christmas gift that my dad ever gave me."

In Denmark, one of these fine young men said, "When I received my call, my grandfather was using tobacco.

Then and there he said that he would quit, and he did. He never went to Church much before I left, but now he goes regularly. And, he has lately gone to the temple. Now the greatest hope that I have is that my dad will prepare himself to go to the temple with his family so that we can enjoy our family association forever as we now do." He said, "If my mission does nothing more than to bring my family to a realization that the gospel is the most important thing in their lives it will have been worth while."

It is true that parents live in their thoughts every day and almost every hour with their missionary sons and daughters.

One young man from Springville said, "Every time my mother tells anyone that she has a son in the mission field, she can hardly keep from crying because she is so proud of me. She feels that I am filling a mission for two. You see, when my father received his call, he was financially unable to go. I am determined to give this mission the best I have, both for him and for myself."

Working hand in hand with the missionaries from the stakes of Zion there are in each of these ten missions a surprising number of local, full-time missionaries as well as part-time missionaries. The devotion of these young men and young women as well as their effectiveness are equal to that of our missionaries from America.

When we met in Berlin in our conference, which was attended by nearly six hundred members of the Church, there were present a number from the east part of Berlin. Among them were twenty-one missionaries who were laboring under Brother Berkhart, a counselor in the mission presidency. After the general meeting we met with them and heard their testimonies and their reports. It touched our hearts to feel their faith, their spiritual strength, and their love of the gospel. I said to them in conclusion, "Remember that the brethren and the Saints are praying for you."

One of them raised his hand and stood up and said, "Brother Christiansen, tell the Saints and the brethren, that we are praying for them." I thought that was wonderful to think

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that they would be concerned about our well-being.

Directing the labors of these missionaries are the mission presidents who, along with their capable wives, are carrying out their heavy assignments with complete devotion. I pay my tribute to their unselfish and efficient service.

In these ten missions there are nearly forty-five thousand members of the Church. I could see that the gospel is a compelling instrument in transforming the lives of those who accept it and who live it.

One convert, a teacher in a university, put it this way: "It is like coming out of the darkness into the light. It is so consistent with reason, and it gives understanding and assurance which all men need."

The faith of many is something to behold. In Heidelberg, Germany, a local district president stood before the pulpit with one arm gone, having lost it in the war. He formerly was a high officer in the SS. Then, he carried out the orders of the war lords for the destruction of men, but now having been converted to the gospel, he stood before this group of Saints, humbly, carrying out the wishes and the plans of the Lord for the salvation of men.

A convert of a year or so, living in Hallein, Austria, who is a self-supporting woman, insists on paying twenty percent in tithing. When we talked to her, she said, "Why, I have been a member of the Church only a short time, and I have missed out on many blessings. I feel that I can never repay the Lord for what I have received in finding the truth. Let me go forward with this program."

My brothers and sisters, I felt a surge of interest amongst the people in those missions. Respect for the Church and even admiration on the part of the people, generally, is evident. This has come not only because of a better plan of presenting the gospel and increased effectiveness of the missionaries, but also where new buildings of our own design have been erected it is not difficult to see that the respect and the interest of the people, beyond that of curiosity, has increased and a wider interest is manifested by many fine people.

Where public meetings were held in our own buildings the attendance of friends and investigators was far beyond our expectations. Fifteen buildings were dedicated in these missions on this tour.

I found that in place of mere tolerance there is an ever-increasing desire to recognize and to investigate, and I am convinced that an epoch of growth and progress is immediately before us in the various missions in Europe and Scandinavia. In practically every city, except in one mission where the state has not recognized this Church as such, we were visited by polite, interested reporters who gave very good and honest publicity. Twenty-six reporters attended a news conference in the city of Berlin and stayed for an hour and fifteen minutes asking pertinent questions about the Church. I was informed that very acceptable newspaper articles appeared in the press the following day.

The presence of the Swiss and the London temples has had a very definite and noticeable effect upon the people in the areas surrounding them and far into the other lands as well. These temples bring to Europe not only a newness to the landscape, but more importantly, they bring also a newness of thought and of purpose to the lives of thousands of people who know about them and their purposes.

This newness of life's purpose is expressed in the words of a visitor to the London Temple prior to its dedication. After the nature of the work to be done in the temple had been explained, members of the group were asked if they wished to comment or ask questions. One said, "I can say nothing. I'm overwhelmed because of the beautiful and desirable principles that have been revealed to me here today." People are still coming onto the grounds, feeling the influence of those sacred edifices and learning from the guides there the true purpose of life and of salvation.

I was instructed, by the First Presidency, to encourage the members to engage in genealogical research. I did this to the best of my ability. I was pleased to note the willing response and the certain interest that was manifested on the part of the Saints everywhere and to find that now in almost

every district there is a genealogical organization set up with men and women who have considerable understanding as to the procedures of genealogical research.

I am happy to return in service to the Church and to the Lord a little of that which I have received in such abundance. I am happy to bear my testimony. I know that Jesus is the Redeemer, the Savior of mankind. I know that the gospel has been restored according to the promise of the Lord through his prophets and that Joseph Smith was the instrument in his hands; that all Presidents of the Church were and are prophets, seers, and revelators. I know that in due time of the Lord our testimonies will be vindicated, be-

cause in the words of another, "Truth like the sun permits itself to be obscured, but like the sun only for a time."

May God bless us that we may be true and faithful, I pray, humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

He who has given us that glimpse of his recent visit to Europe is Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve. Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder LeGrand Richards, who will be our concluding speaker.

### BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

#### *Presiding Bishop of the Church*

President McKay, my brethren and sisters, I sincerely hope that I may have the inspiration and guidance necessary to express to you one or two thoughts.

I have been thinking about the Israelites when they were in Egypt and were slaves, but through the guidance and direction of the Prophet Moses, it was possible for them to become free and leave Egypt and go to the Promised Land. The Lord gave them inspiration through Moses and guided them which built them up in the faith that God actually lived and that in the future, his Son, Jesus Christ, would appear upon the earth. He gave them the Ten Commandments. I draw to your attention the eighth commandment. I shall only read part of it. The Lord said, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

"But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . ." (Exodus 20:8-10.)

As the Israelites traveled along, they forgot the Ten Commandments. They gathered together their gold and built the golden calf which they worshiped in place of the Lord, and they forgot the Lord's day—the Sabbath day. They failed to meet together on the Sabbath day and thank the Lord for all of the

blessings that he bestowed upon them, namely freedom and the right to hold the Promised Land.

This event with reference to keeping the Sabbath day holy by commandment from God took place 3,500 years ago. Two thousand years ago, the Christ taught the world to keep the Sabbath day holy, for he declared, "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:" (Mark 2:27.) Conditions in the world then as of today indicate that man is made for the Sabbath and not the Sabbath for man. Brethren and sisters, if people will give consideration of the Sabbath as a holy day and remember God who has given them life as their Father and Jesus Christ, his Son, as their older Brother, meeting together in priesthood meeting and Sacrament meeting with the attitude of prayer, they will be blessed, guided, and directed by divine inspiration whereby they can bear testimony that God actually lives and that Christ is his Son.

Again, it was necessary for the Lord to make it clear to the people that the Sabbath day is his day, a holy day, for on August 7, 1831, one hundred and twenty-seven years ago, an American Prophet, Joseph Smith, received a revelation from the Lord, "And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted