

ELDER JOHN LONGDEN

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My testimony has been strengthened and my faith increased in the glorious truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ to which we have listened today. It does answer the questions: why these general conferences, why these quarterly conferences, why these conferences of the auxiliary organizations—"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," (Eph. 4:12) until we all come to a knowledge of the truth.

I have reminisced as Brother Hanks has been speaking. I am sure he will pardon me if I make reference to him and his marvelous family. It was my privilege to live in the Nineteenth Ward in the Salt Lake Stake. On October 12, 1921, I left for my mission to the Central States. The day after, there came into the home of Brother and Sister Hanks, not a small boy—he was rather large, I understand—I was not there, but I have heard—and he was named Marion. Well, you have seen his works; you have felt his spirit. There are others in this family just as good and just as devoted to building up the kingdom of God.

Theirs is an example of a good Latter-day Saint home, wherein are taught the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ; wherein they gather in humble prayer and thanksgiving for the blessings which have come into their lives; wherein they are taught the true joys of service to God and our fellow men. My, what a contrast to the story he has just related to us.

There is another anniversary this week—if I may be pardoned for making reference to it—just fifty years ago on the 7th of October my father and I arrived in Salt Lake City—a boy of ten, coming to a new world with one purpose in mind, to be close to the center of the Church and to serve the Lord.

I am grateful for that father who listened to the missionaries some sixty-three years ago in England, about two years before I was born, who accepted these truths and for about forty-five years was associated with the Scout program of the Church.

I shall ever be grateful for my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ,

and to the young people today may I say that there is no obsolescence in the teachings of the gospel. As I understand the definition of *obsolete* it means something that is old-fashioned, that we have outgrown, something that is ancient or antiquated and maybe, in the terms of modern language, "old stuff" or "for the birds."

The gospel of Jesus Christ is just as vital and essential today as it was when it was instituted in our pre-existent estate. Jesus Christ is the Author of salvation. I know this as I know I am standing here today. I have that witness.

We may be termed peculiar, but that is nothing new. Whenever there has been a dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the earth, the followers have been referred to as "a peculiar people." Moses so declared. Peter and Paul so declared. I would recall the words of Peter:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (I Peter 2:9.)

It is wonderful to bask in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ which banishes fear, which banishes confusion and frustrations, and, oh, the need for remembering these things today.

So I pray that we will acknowledge the hand of God as we have listened to his mouthpiece and prophet in his keynote address to this great conference, admonishing us to teach the word. We make no apology for teaching truth, we need make no compromise with the philosophies and teachings of men. The only time we are on dangerous ground is when we pull away from the teachings of the Master, for I assure you the Master does not pull away from us. As individuals we are prone to pull away from him because of things we do and say not in harmony with his teachings.

May we have a desire reburnished in our minds and our hearts as we leave this conference, to be more dedicated in the service of the Master, putting our own homes in order, having family prayer, our individual prayer, paying

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our tithes and offerings, keeping the Word of Wisdom, and being chaste and benevolent. As I speak of putting our homes in order, I should like to suggest that we take note of what comes into the hands of our youth, our own children. We must make sure they are not having their minds poisoned by the garbage, if you please, that is on many of the newsstands and available through other channels throughout the nation.

Time will not permit me to go into this subject further, but I call to mind a headline which I read just recently as I visited one of the stakes in the East and it told of this sad story:

As the story was told, a man, an employee of the city of New York for some thirty years, a respected employee, married, with grown children who were married, had working with him a young man about twenty-five, also married. Unknown to their wives, they had been in the dastardly business of producing vile film, pornography, and were arrested with over \$500,000 worth of the filthy stuff in their possession in one of their garages. I mention again, they were married men with children of their own, deliberately poisoning the minds of young people, taking advantage of living in a land where our forefathers came to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, a land built upon freedom and liberty.

I call to mind a statement made by a minister a couple of weeks ago as the Premier from Russia visited in the United States. He said he hoped that Mr. Khrushchev would come to his church ". . . to see how we worship."

How are we worshipping? Are we the followers of Jesus Christ only on the Sabbath day, or just when we are in priesthood meeting, or is it that worship which reflects good and his peace as we go forth in our various travels, endeavors, and walks of life, truly being an influence every day, every hour, every minute for good to our fellow men?

I pray that we as parents will seek to know what our children are feeding

upon, and see that they feed upon the truths found in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, the four Standard Works of the Church. Then they will not suffer from malnourishment of the Spirit, and we will be fitting them to withstand the buffeting of Satan.

I bear you my witness and testimony that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, the Divine Son of our Heavenly Father, that Joseph Smith was and is a Prophet of God, and that those who have succeeded him as Presidents of this Church down to President David O. McKay today, have been and are mouthpieces and prophets of our Lord.

I bear you my solemn witness that President McKay holds the keys and authority, the keys of the kingdom, and that the mantle of authority is upon him. I am so thankful for that witness, and I pray that I may be able to continue to bear this testimony as the Lord permits. I pray his peace and blessing upon us humbly, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen will now lead the Singing Mothers and the Congregation in singing "O Say, What Is Truth?" Elder Milton R. Hunter will speak to us after the singing.

The congregation and the Singing Mothers joined in singing the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President David O. McKay:

Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder LeGrand Richards, who will be our concluding speaker.