

General Authorities, General Officers, General Auxiliary Officers of the Church for your sustaining vote. We thank you, brothers and sisters, for your unanimous vote in the affirmative.

Brother Howard W. Hunter, will you

please come forward and take your place in the Council of the Twelve.

We shall now hear from Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie.

## ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My dear brethren and sisters, I am wholly dependent upon the blessings of the Lord, and pray that his Holy Spirit may direct me to say that which he would have me say.

Yesterday we heard something about youth marriages, ninety percent of which end in divorce. [See Elder Mark E. Petersen's address.] A very deplorable condition was reported as prevailing in some places among some people. I should like, if the Lord will bless me to that end, to say something about a form of marriage that our people, young and old, may enter into, one that our people should look forward to and be prepared for, and I am persuaded that because many are not so prepared, there is a lack of proper understanding among parents and children and a lack of proper appreciation of the great importance of this marriage that involves the salvation and eternal life of our people.

We speak of salvation, and I am wondering if we know what it means. The Lord made this wonderful declaration among the glorious things that he has told us: "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

What is eternal life? What is immortality? What is exaltation and salvation? The Lord says: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

The Lord Jesus Christ said, as we have it in the New Testament: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

"... That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (*Ibid.*, 3:14-15.) This is understood as salvation through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

First, what is immortality? In the 29th section of the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord said: "And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation—that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality"—death is the door to immortality—and then the Lord continues, "unto eternal life, even as many as would believe;

"And they that believe not unto eternal damnation. . . ." (D&C 29:43-44.)

So through the atonement of Jesus Christ immortality comes, and has come to every human soul, and will always come. The Lord also says in the 29th section that the trump should sound for the resurrection, ". . . and then shall all the dead awake, for their graves shall be opened, and they shall come forth—yea, even all." (*Ibid.*, 29:26.) This is in agreement with the teachings in the New Testament which declare:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29.)

So they shall *all* come forth from the grave. What then? The Prophet Amulek says: "Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption." (Alma 11:45.) This is immortality. It comes to every

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soul, good or bad, believer or non-believer. It has already been established for all the souls of man who ever have lived or who will live in the future.

Now what is eternal life? In attempting to discuss this great subject, and the time so short, I thought I might bring to you the words of the Lord himself upon this subject so that you may ponder them as you may have opportunity. The Lord defines eternal life very clearly in the 88th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, fourth verse.

"This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom"; Then to make plain that eternal life is the fulness of the celestial glory, he explains further, "Which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son—" (D&C 88:4-5.)

I refer you to section 76:53-70 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which explains in more detail the fulness of the glory of the celestial kingdom, which the Lord says is eternal life, which he further confirms when he said, ". . . if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (*Ibid.*, 14:7.) This then is *eternal life*.

And how shall we obtain eternal life? Well, only through the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no other way, and as President Smith emphasized yesterday, the salvation that we are talking about as servants of God and the people of God with this dispensation of the gospel given to us for the world, is exaltation, a fulness of God's gift, eternal life.

Now, the Lord revealed the glorious principles of the gospel in the Book of Mormon as restored through the Prophet Joseph, and for fourteen years the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith principles of life and salvation. One of these revelations is the 132nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants, regarding the "new and everlasting covenant of marriage," which is very specific in its character, and the Lord, in mentioning it and introducing the subject to the Prophet, makes these very striking and significant statements:

"For behold, I reveal unto you a new

and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory." (*Ibid.*, 132:4.)

Remember that statement—the covenant of celestial or heavenly marriage, if rejected by us, shuts us out of his glory.

"For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world.

"And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 5-6.)

Now that is as explicit and plain as anything could be, and the fulness of God's glory is eternal life, the greatest gift that God can give and that is involved in this principle of marriage, as instituted of God by the authority of God, and in being true to the covenants of that marriage.

Then the Lord, to explain the principle more clearly, refers to the ordinary marriage. He says: "And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God.

"For whatsoever things remain are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed.

"Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world." (*Ibid.*, 13-15.)

Then note what follows: "Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are

worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory." (*Ibid.*, 16.)

The status has changed. The Lord continues, "For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever." (*Ibid.*, 17.)

They may be saved in the celestial kingdom, but they cannot be enlarged, and forever and ever they remain a person of a lower degree—a lower order of being, stripped of the greatest power, that of eternal increase.

"For strait is the gate," the Lord continues, "and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me. . . ."

"Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law." (*Ibid.*, 22, 25.)

Therefore we see that eternal life which God says it is his glory and honor to bring to mankind is gained by obedience to the law of eternal marriage, which is instituted before the foundations of the world, to bring about the fulness of exaltation.

In the 132nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verses 19-21, the Lord explains the covenant and blessings of celestial marriage as follows:

"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto

them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

"Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory."

Now I believe that our teachers, our leaders, and our parents must be taught and must teach these principles. They are as clear as words can make them, as the Lord has explained them. I cannot help feeling that many are not being properly married because they are not properly taught. It is not enough to urge temple marriage. They must know what temple marriage means. It is a matter of eternal life and exaltation in the presence of God forever and forever.

I close with a statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith: "In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

"And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

"And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

"He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase." (*Ibid.*, 131:1-4.)

May the Lord help us to awaken our youth and the parents, and all of us, to the need to know what this marriage is, to live worthy of it, to be prepared for it, for our youth to enter into it when they are mature enough, and trained enough, and for all who have been married for time only to prepare themselves for this glorious covenant—because in this marriage that God has instituted there are three parties to it. God is the principal party, and the

union is consummated by his power and his authority, and his promises are attached to that union. If, in it, we are faithful and true to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we shall be exalted in his presence and dwell with him forever.

May God give us the power to make clear to all these glorious revelations, now available to the world, because the gospel has been restored in its

fulness, and for the full salvation of the human soul.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

### ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

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

May I take as a text these words which were dictated by the Holy Ghost to an inspired man in ancient Israel:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

"The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

"Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Psalm 19:7-11.)

Now if I may be enlightened by the same Spirit that rested upon him who wrote these words, I would like to indicate the great compelling necessity, the overwhelming obligation, that rests upon us as members of this great latter-day kingdom, to come to a knowledge of the law of the Lord, to know the doctrines of the gospel, to understand the principles, requirements, and ordinances which we must comply with in order to be heirs of salvation in the Lord's kingdom.

We believe and advocate that every member of this Church should have a testimony of the divinity of the work; that he should know for himself, independent of any other person, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that salvation is in him; that Joseph Smith is the agent and instrument through whom the knowledge of salvation has come again in our day; and that the mantle of the Prophet rests upon President

David O. McKay at this time. By first gaining a testimony and then by being valiant in testimony, we can be heirs of salvation.

But no man can have a testimony of this work until he begins to get a knowledge of the gospel. A testimony is based on knowledge; first a man must learn about God and his laws, and then by obedience to these laws he will gain a testimony. Jesus said, "... My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:16-17.)

We believe that all members of this Church should be fully and completely converted, so much so that they are changed from a natural and fallen state into saints of God, changed into a state where they have in their hearts desires for righteousness. By following such a course they are born again; they are renewed of the Spirit; they are in line for eternal salvation. But no one can attain unto such a state until he knows the laws that govern the process of being converted.

We believe that after we join this Church it is incumbent upon us to press forward in steadfastness and in devotion, living by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, desiring righteousness, seeking his Spirit, loving him with all our hearts, mights, minds, and strength; and yet we cannot do any of these things until we first learn the laws which govern them. In the full gospel sense, there is no such thing as living a law of which we are ignorant. We cannot worship a God of whom we know nothing, as far as gaining eternal