

we are closest by." Think how near they were who lived contemporaneously with Jesus. He walked among them. They heard his teachings. They knew of his miracles, and yet they were so far away. When Satan came among them saying, "Believe it not," they pronounced their own doom upon themselves by saying, "His blood be upon us and our children." (Matt. 27:25.) And so it has been, and so it may be with us.

We are so near. We have the great scriptures. We have the judgment of time shining upon the life of Christ. The gospel has been restored in a fullness never before known in the world. We have the written testimony of many witnesses, both ancient and modern, and yet if we "believe it not" we may be so far away. Even in this great age of wonders and enlightenment, Satan is still inducing us to mark our souls with the contamination of inferior

thoughts, whereas the greatest opportunity of our lives is to read more and study more and believe more and live more, that word of God which is still able to make us wise unto salvation.

One of the most thrilling accomplishments that I can think of, is that as a Church and as a nation we may aspire to say out of a full understanding, "We believe the Bible to be the word of God." May we so order our lives that this great accomplishment may be brought about, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve. Elder Hugh B. Brown of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER HUGH B. BROWN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, and I hope our friends, who are present and who are listening in, who are not members of the Church, will permit me to include them in that salutation, "brothers and sisters," because we believe in the brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God, and that Fatherhood which is universal.

Although I come to this assignment semiannually, it is always humbling and sometimes almost overwhelming. But it is reassuring to know that one has the sympathy and prayers of this great congregation and, we hope, the interest of an even larger audience of friendly listeners who are attending conference by means of radio and television.

We are mindful of the unseen audience and prayerfully attempt to assist all who seek a better understanding of some phases of what has been called the "Phenomenon of Mormonism."

In the past, unfortunately, when discussing basic religious questions, it was more difficult to find common ground of understanding than when considering, for instance, science or philosophy. The prejudice of the past

closed some minds to truth and made communication impossible. Victor Hugo promised that "A day will come when the only battlefield will be the market open to commerce and the mind open to new ideas." Thank the Lord that day is dawning, at least in our western world. As A. Powell Davies said, "The world is too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but brotherhood."

I should like to enter a plea for friendship, understanding, brotherhood, and tolerance, all so badly needed in our confused and troubled world. In one of our Articles of Faith we claim for ourselves, and freely accord to all men, the untrammelled right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.

Intolerance, one of the bitter fruits of ignorance and bigotry, has plagued the world from the beginning and has been responsible for much of its sorrow and misery. Maurice Samuel, defender of the Jews, wrote in *The Professor and the Fossil*:

"For all peoples, are, alas, in the habit of killing their prophets and teachers. The English martyred their

protestant teachers (having failed to martyr Wycliffe they desecrated his corpse), the French martyred Joan of Arc, the Bohemian princes betrayed John Huss. If these do not rank among the world's greatest, Socrates, put to death by the Athenians, does."

When we think of historic intolerance, two names come immediately to mind. In chronological order, but not in the order of importance, they are Socrates of Athens and Jesus of Nazareth. They, of course, cannot be compared, but their experiences illustrate the subject.

As we read in "Great Books of the Western World," the first named gave to Plato and Aristotle their lofty inspiration, and the name of Socrates has come down through the centuries as the most virtuous man of his time. Yet he was convicted of impiety and immorality, and he was condemned to die—mercifully by hemlock.

The second, the only perfect person who ever lived, took upon himself the sins of the world and suffered the ignominy of crucifixion—to him more agonizing than physical pain. He is now, after nearly twenty centuries, supreme above all others in moral grandeur and to millions is revered as the Only Begotten Son of God, the Savior of the world.

These two, and many others since their time, were rejected by their contemporaries because they dared to question current belief, were impatient of the status quo, and pioneered new areas of thought and teaching.

Phillips Brooks reminds us that there are different brands of tolerance. He named six as follows:

"First, the tolerance of pure *indifference*. We may be tolerant because we do not care, because the issue at stake does not concern us.

"Second, the tolerance of *policy*. We may be tolerant because we think we would lose more than we gain by fighting the man or the measure.

"Third, the tolerance of *helplessness*. We may be tolerant because we realize that the enemy holds the field and that resistance will be futile.

"Fourth, the tolerance of *pure respect for man*. We may be tolerant because we respect even a man's right to think wrong, because we agree with Voltaire when he wrote to Helvetius, 'I wholly

disapprove of what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it.'

"Fifth, the tolerance of *spiritual sympathy*. We may be tolerant because we feel a spiritual comradeship with the man whose purpose is fine even if his proposition is false.

"Sixth, the tolerance of an *enlarged view of truth*. We may be tolerant because we have come to realize that truth is larger than any one man's conception of it, even if we are the one man in question."

The first three are mean; the last three magnificent.

The early members of the Mormon Church were forced to drink to its bitter dregs from the cup of prejudice and intolerance. They were mobbed, dispossessed of their homes and properties, beaten, imprisoned, banished, and some of them, including their leaders, were murdered; the main charge against them being that they were unorthodox, dared to question the teachings of other churches, and claimed new revelation.

John Stuart Mill, in his well-known essay on liberty, said:

"I cannot refrain from adding to these examples of the little account commonly made of human liberty, the language of downright persecution which breaks out from the press of this country whenever it feels called on to notice the remarkable phenomenon of Mormonism."

Mill further called attention to the fact that such persecution, far from being in any way countenanced by the principle of liberty, was a direct infraction of that principle and was a mere riveting of the chains of one half of the community and an emancipation of the other from reciprocity of obligation toward them.

History shows that not only individuals and smaller groups, but also governments and powerful church organizations have been guilty of cruel intolerance toward those who differ with them. The alleged universal church resorted to violent acts of intolerance and went to almost unbelievable extremes in their attempts to enforce adherence to the orthodox view. By persecution, torture, expulsion, and extermination of so-called heretics they sought to stifle inquiry and investigation, as though men could by fire and sword be compelled to profess certain

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doctrines. The remarkable thing is that they who first broke the yoke of that church were themselves unwilling to permit differences of religious opinion as soon as they became established. Unbridled power often breeds intolerance and leads to tyranny.

The Christlike life is always a combination of earnest, personal conviction and generous regard for the other man's opinion. Dedication to and defense of truth never require or justify breaking the second commandment to love our fellow men. A divine code was given by revelation for the guidance of all who exercise authority.

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

"Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

"That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death." (D&C 121:41-44.)

However, the Church must not condone evil or wrongdoing in the name of tolerance. It must not acquiesce or become an accessory, even by silence, when error and sin are arrayed against truth and righteousness. We must be on guard against alien ideologies and subtle, subversive concepts, leading to immoral conduct and apostasy. Whenever symptoms of apostasy appear in propaganda or conduct, remedial measures are applied. But when counsel, admonition, and instruction fail, the Church has a duty to its members to take positive action and either heal or amputate malignant growths.

The Savior said: ". . . if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." (Matthew 5:29.) But the Church has no jurisdiction outside its own membership; nor does any church have jurisdiction over any other. Various churches stand in much the

same relation to each other as private persons among themselves. As John Locke said long ago:

"If any one of the churches has power of treating the other ill, which of them is it to whom that power belongs, and by what right? It will be answered undoubtedly that it is the orthodox church which has the right of authority over the erroneous and heretical. This is, he says, in great and specious words to say just nothing, for every church is orthodox to itself. The decision as to which is right is a question which belongs to the supreme judge of all men."

Some traditionally orthodox churches have seemed to be concerned primarily with the perpetuation of conventional beliefs, formulas, rituals, and institutions. They require meticulous conformity to traditional modes of belief and ceremony. Their chief objective seems to have been to maintain the status quo.

But the Church of Jesus Christ, whenever organized on the earth, whether during the brief sojourn of the Savior in the Meridian of Time and the subsequent activities of his apostles, or since the restoration in the fulness of times, has always subjected traditional beliefs and ritual to searching criticism in the light of continued revelation and ever-increasing knowledge. Its inspired appraisals of human and spiritual values go directly to the core of individual and social living here and now with a constant reminder of the effect of such living on the life hereafter. Its latter-day organization was preceded by a sweeping indictment of sectarianism and the creeds of the time and a proclamation of a new revelation from God. Criticism of traditional beliefs and ritual has often been met by persecution rather than sound argument.

When Jesus was on the earth, he was frequently met with objectors and hecklers who, looking backward, appealed to the law of Moses. His characteristic forward-looking reply was, "It has been said by them of old . . . but I say unto you. . . ." In other words, he spoke with divine authority. He was concerned as we are with the individual, with the social order, and with establishing the kingdom of God on earth preparatory to the coming of the kingdom of heaven. He invited his

listeners to put his teachings to the test of actual experience, saying if any man would do his will he would know of the doctrine. That is a continuing promise to all men everywhere.

In the spirit of friendship and brotherhood we ask our listeners to consider prayerfully our message, put our doctrines to the test of which Jesus spoke, and we promise you that you shall know whether our doctrine is of God or merely of men.

Briefly the message of Mormonism is that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the true God, the Messiah of the New Testament; that the King James version of the Holy Bible is in fact the word of God and that Jesus of Nazareth is in fact the Christ; that the prophecies recorded in the Bible concerning the last days are now in the course of fulfilment; that a new dispensation of the gospel has been given to men and that the kingdom of God is now divinely organized on earth preparatory to the coming of the kingdom of heaven. This message, if it be true, and to its truth we humbly testify, is the most important message that has come to this world since the resurrection and ascension of the Savior of the world. This may seem to some to be an extravagant statement but it refers to a visit of the same glorified being who ascended into heaven with his resurrected body in the presence of his followers and of angels who promised he would come again. He appeared to men in our time preparatory to his promised second coming when he is to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

We declare that God has intervened in the affairs of men in anticipation of the final struggle against the hosts of Hades, the Anti-Christ, who are organized and marshaled for war against religion and God and all the principles of freedom, justice, love, and tolerance for which the Savior died.

Coupled with this declaration of faith in a personal God and in his nearness to this world is a re-affirmation of the Biblical doctrine that man was created in the image of God and therefore has a potential godlike status, with capacity to live and progress forever. We believe in the essential dignity of man, that he was intended by his Creator to be free

and not a slave to any man or nation. We shall never surrender to the belief that man is a soulless device made to serve a machine or a state. We believe that his freedom is, next to life itself, his most precious gift. In fact, man is willing to sacrifice his life to secure and preserve freedom.

We believe in the immortality of the soul; that death is integral to life, a phase of life, its continuance, not its end; and that men who keep the commandments of God need not fear death, for we shall, as Tennyson said, meet our Pilot face to face when that which drew from out the boundless deep turns again home and we have "Crossed the Bar."

Grant us peace, oh Lord, the peace which comes from understanding, from tolerance and brotherhood, from love of our fellow men and love of thee, the Lord. May thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

The great declaration and impressive testimony to which you have just listened was given by Elder Hugh B. Brown, a member of the Council of the Twelve.

The closing song will be given by the Tabernacle Choir, "Crossing the Bar," part of which was quoted, conducted by Richard P. Condie. The closing prayer will be offered by Elder Berkeley L. Bunker, formerly president of the Southern States Mission, following which this Conference will stand adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

Brethren and sisters, in bringing to a conclusion this sixth session of the One Hundred Twenty-Ninth Semi-Annual Conference, we express our sincere appreciation to the owners and managers of the many television and radio stations who have offered their facilities to us this morning. We are grateful for this wonderful public service so generously extended. Eighteen major cities in the West have carried the proceedings of this Conference through radio and television. According to a survey that has been made, it is estimated that there have been about one million people listening in this morning.

We are grateful also for the attend-