

## PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

My brethren: I am more grateful than I can say for the privilege which I have tonight to say something to you. The Lord has been good to me far beyond any desert I know about. I am grateful for your prayers and the prayers of my Brethren who have brought this to pass.

As I stand before you tonight to say a few words (and they are going to be few, because I feel that the people of the Church wish to hear the President of the Church and I do not like to see the hour pass and have our friends who are not here, not hear him say all he would like to say), we are all bearers of the Priesthood, we who are here and the tens of thousands who are assembling in other places to hear what is said here.

Brethren, I refer again and for a moment only, to what the influence, the power of this Church would be, if we were united as one man. Then we might meet the principle announced in the Prayer of the Great High Priest in the Garden, when He prayed that the Disciples might be one, even as He and the Father were one, and as He declared in modern revelation: "I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine." (John 17:21; D.C. 38:27.)

I am told that Brother Matt Cowley once voiced this idea: He said something of this sort, "You know, I am so busy trying to understand the first principles of the Gospel that I have no time for the mysteries."

As I have thought about what I might say in the few minutes I shall be with you here at the stand, I have thought I would like to say just a little bit about the Priesthood itself. We are all bearers of it, the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God.

What is this Priesthood that we have? We have had our definitions. I will come to them, if I may, just a few minutes later. But I have thought that I would like to look first somewhat at the work of our Savior. His work was performed through faith. If you will examine a little bit carefully His life, you will find that in His miracles He performed many of the great functions of

creation. He worked, I repeat, by the power of the Priesthood.

You will remember that He walked upon the water, thus defying and overruling, so far as we can see, the principle of gravity. You will remember that Peter asked to be bidden to come to Him. Peter being so bidden, got out of the boat and walked a short distance on the water and then becoming fearful, he began to sink and called to the Lord for help, and the Lord said to him, "O thou of little faith. . . ."

You will remember that on one occasion He was on the Sea of Galilee and a violent storm came up, so much so that those who were with Him feared for the sinking of the ship. They awakened Him and appealed to Him and He stilled the tempest, having power over the forces that were involved in that.

You will recall that He fed a multitude with a few loaves and a few fishes, five thousand on one occasion, four thousand on another. You will recall that He also provided miraculous draughts of fish on two or three occasions. The whole world was under him.

You will recall that He cursed the barren fig tree. You will recall that He raised the dead to life again. Think of what was involved in that.

You will recall His thousands, almost (so far as we know), of healings of all sorts of diseases. These were manifestations of the power of faith. Sometimes it seems the faith was partially exercised by those whom He healed, as when the woman touched the border of His garment and was healed of an issue of blood. At other times it seemed as if the faith came from Himself. Think of the blessing of faith exercised through the Priesthood.

On more than one occasion, He said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed. . . ." (Secs. 103, 140.)\* The commentators, I may add, make no explanation of this. The only statement I have found about that statement,—faith is as a grain of mustard seed—is that the mustard seed is one of the smallest of

\*Our Lord of The Gospels.

seeds. And that was followed by, ". . . ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove." (Secs. 103, 163a.) And the commentators, who do not understand nor, apparently, believe in faith, say that this merely was an exaggerated imagery of the East; and that the expression "remove mountains" was common among Jewish preachers as indicating the impressiveness with which a man might speak, and referred only to difficulty. It is my judgment, my belief, my testimony, that the possible removal of a mountain is a sober statement of fact.

He told them at one time that if they had the faith, if they believed, they could say to a sycamine tree, "Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea," and it would be done. (Sec. 140.) I believe that. I believe that is literally true.

We have been given that Priesthood which carries in it this great power of faith. It has been given to us, you, me, and all who are listening in of the brethren holding the Priesthood.

What about it? Paul said, ". . . faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1, I.V.) I have never been able quite to understand that, but I can understand what has been said either by the Prophet Joseph or with his approval, found in the old "Lectures on Faith" in the Doctrine and Covenants. He said:

"By this we understand that the principle of power which existed in the bosom of God, by which the worlds were framed, was faith; and that it is by reason of this principle of power existing in the Deity, that all created things exist; so that all things in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, exist by reason of faith as it existed in Him." (Lectures on Faith, 1:15.)

As I think about faith, this principle of power, I am obliged to believe that it is an intelligent force. Of what kind, I do not know. But it is superior to and overrules all other forces of which we know. It is the principle, the force, by which the dead are restored to life.

I do not believe that the Lord, that God permits any man to have faith that would overrule His purposes. In that connection, I call to your attention the

fact that the Savior, Himself, plead that His crucifixion might be turned aside. Yet, on one occasion He said, when He asked that the hour might be passed on, ". . . but for this cause came I unto this hour." The Son of God was not given the necessary faith at that time to enable Him to turn aside the purposes reached by Himself and the Father before and still remembered by the Father. I repeat, I think that the Lord never gives faith to any individual to enable him to overturn the purposes of His will. Always we are subject to what He wishes.

I think that we should never administer to the sick, we should never pray, particularly when we pray for specific things, that we do not repeat and present to the Lord, even as Christ prayed in the Garden, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

You brethren, we brethren, have had this great power given unto us, this power of faith. What are we doing about it? Can you, can we, do the mighty things that the Savior did? Yes. They have been done by the members of the Church who had the faith and the righteousness so to do. Think of what is within your power if you but live the Gospel, if you but live so that you may invoke the power which is within you.

And I would like to add this as a sobering thought to myself and to you, each of you, and all of you: Remember the parable of the talents where the man who failed to improve the talent given him, had it taken from him? I ask you brethren, and myself, are we magnifying our Priesthood in such a way, are we living close enough to the Lord and in obedience to His commandments that we may exercise this power, or shall it be wholly or in part taken away from us? You would better think about it. It is worth thinking about. It is the greatest power that has been revealed to man.

God grant that we may all so live that we shall not lose that power, but that always it shall be available to us.

Bearing my testimony again that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was the instrument, along with his associates, in the re-establishing of

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the Church, that all of the rights, powers, and privileges that were lodged in the Prophet have descended to our present President and are enjoyed by him, I bear this testimony and I ask these blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

This is very urgent. Bishop Carr of Ephrata, Washington, wants Harold Pierson to call him, through operator five in Washington, Skyline 4-3684. If Brother Pierson gets that, please respond immediately.

### PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

There are present tonight in this great Conference, as reported from the various groups, 53,265 men, the largest attendance ever.

There are a number of service men present, and as the theme of this meeting began with reference to service men and our duty to them, will all the service men present in the Tabernacle and the Assembly Hall please rise. Thank you, and welcome.

"If I were a voice—a persuasive voice  
That could travel the wide world  
through,  
I would fly on the beams of the morning  
light,  
And speak to men with a gentle might,  
And tell them to be true.

I'd fly o'er land and sea,  
Wherever a human heart might be,  
Telling a tale, or singing a song,  
In praise of the Right and in blame of  
the Wrong."

—Charles MacKay

The poet who wrote that had but one thought in his mind, and that was that men should be true to each other and true to their ideals. To the fifty thousand and more men of the Priesthood tonight, that is what I should like to say, and I should like to say it in the inspired words of Joseph Smith recorded at the end of that marvelous revelation on Priesthood:

"Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand. Even so. Amen."  
(D&C 107:99-100.)

Two things mentioned in that revela-

tion point out important elements in the Priesthood.

First, learning one's duty, and that means learning what kind of life a man who holds the Priesthood should live, being true to himself, to his loved ones, to the Church, to God. Every individual has that duty, and particularly every individual who holds the Priesthood. If he is honest to himself he is honest with the brethren; he is fair in his dealings in business circles; in politics he speaks the truth; he merits the confidence of his associates in business, civic areas, and particularly he should live so as to merit the confidence of members of the Church who trust him.

But the Lord was not content when he gave to the individual the Priesthood. He organized those men who were true in upholding the ideals of the Priesthood into groups that they might render group service to their fellow men. I hope that the fifty thousand men listening tonight caught that emphasis in the message illustrated so impressively by Brother Lee.

The duty of quorum Priesthood members to keep in touch with their members who are out in the service is a very practical idea. I heard of a very successful group of men who were dealing with the Senior Aaronic Priesthood. I wrote to a man who I know has been very active in that work, and if he and his associates can obtain the success he reports, so can every quorum of Priesthood in the Church. He and his group were formed into a ward committee. Listen to a paragraph or two from his interesting report:

"We had a fine group of men on our ward committee and we remained together with only a few changes until recently. We held our planning and