

President David O. McKay:

Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. The Choir and congregation will now sing, "High On the Mountain Top," after which Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin will address us.

The Choir and congregation united in

BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN*Presiding Bishop of the Church*

I sincerely trust, my brothers and sisters, that I might have that spirit and blessing so essential in expressing to you the thoughts I have this morning.

I wish that every young man and young woman could have heard President McKay give his testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and what it means to all of us.

I was inspired by the marvelous priesthood meeting held last night when President Moyle said, "We should have 12,000 young men preaching the gospel to those not of our faith." At the present, the Church has 6,000 missionaries, and, I am sure, President Moyle and brethren and sisters, that it is possible to have 12,000 missionaries in the world preaching the gospel because all of our brethren whether they hold the Aaronic or the Melchizedek Priesthood should have a full knowledge of the gospel and a testimony that they can bear to the world.

Two thousand years ago, it was declared by the Christ, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:14.)

We know Joseph Smith actually saw the Father and the Son. There should be no question about that. He was the first to see the Father and the Son since the apostles were upon the earth nearly 2,000 years ago, and through his testimony we know that God lives, that Jesus Christ is his Son. Having that knowledge and also the priesthood, we, therefore, have the ability and the authority to preach the gospel to the world.

The Prophet Joseph Smith at the age

singing the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top."

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric will now address us. He will be followed by Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr.

of twenty-two was translating the Book of Mormon that the people of the world might have the privilege of receiving that marvelous book and becoming acquainted with the history of America, that Jesus Christ had been upon this the American continent and that he had taught the Nephites the gospel as he had taught the people in far-off Jerusalem. In translating the gold plates, he came upon a passage concerning baptism. Consequently, he made it a matter of prayer, and in answer to that prayer, there appeared a heavenly being who introduced himself as John the Baptist. If you fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers should properly teach your sons and grandsons, when they receive the Aaronic Priesthood, they will have a testimony that this great event took place, that John the Baptist who baptized the Christ appeared and bestowed the Aaronic Priesthood upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

We of the Presiding Bishopric sometimes wonder whether or not, in homes, fathers and mothers are inspiring and encouraging their young men to read that marvelous statement of John the Baptist, the thirteenth section of the Doctrine and Covenants. These are the words of John the Baptist. These are not the words of Joseph Smith or Oliver Cowdery, and because of that fact, all of these young men who hold the Aaronic Priesthood be they deacons, teachers, or priests should be acquainted with that statement. It will become a reality. They will know it actually happened. It would be inspiring to our young people in our homes, brethren and sisters, if we would periodically read the state-

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ment of John the Baptist. These are his words: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." (D&C, section 13.) These words will build a testimony of its truthfulness in their hearts.

After Christ and the apostles had left the earth, the world changed its attitude toward the gospel, and the organization of the Church was taken away. There had been a change in the form of baptism. There had been a change in repentance. In fact, the Church as a whole had changed. Therefore, a great event had to take place wherein great men as Martin Luther and others some four hundred years ago had the courage to declare to the world that the so-called church of that time had gone wrong. They were no longer giving consideration to the priesthood as it existed in the days of the prophets or in the days of John the Baptist.

With the reformation that came through these great men, then, the restoration was necessary. The Lord selected the young man Joseph Smith to restore the true Church. For that reason, John the Baptist appeared and bestowed upon him and Oliver Cowdery the Aaronic Priesthood.

To you bishops who are responsible for men who are laboring with the Aaronic Priesthood, see that all these young men will understand the gospel in its fulness, and as they go on year by year and arrive at the age of twenty, they will have a testimony whereby they can go out into the world and testify that Joseph Smith actually saw the Father and the Son. They will have the knowledge and the ability to teach the world the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All of us who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood hold it because Peter, James, and John bestowed it upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. These are the only young men in the history of nearly 2,000 years who have declared that they actually saw Peter, James, and John, and who bestowed upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. That marvelous

revelation given to the Prophet Joseph and Oliver Cowdery can be found in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 27, verse 12, when Christ said to them and to us who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, "And also with Peter, and James, and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles, . . ." Is there any question that we have apostles today as there were apostles in the days of the Prophet Joseph? There should not be because here we have the words of the Christ himself when he said, ". . . by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles . . ." of the Lord Jesus Christ with the same authority, the same rights and the same privileges that existed nearly 2,000 years ago. Then he said, ". . . and especial witnesses of my name . . ."—to be especial witnesses of the name of Christ himself. We who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, can continually bear testimony to the fact as well as the apostles that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Then he said, ". . . and bear the keys of your ministry and of the same things which I revealed unto them." There should be no question whether we hold the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood but that we have received this authority because it was bestowed upon the Prophet Joseph by John the Baptist and by the apostles, Peter, James, and John.

With reference to youth, I hope the youth of the Church will read the history of the Prophet Joseph Smith and read of all of these great events which took place, remembering he called upon the Lord at the age of fourteen. The Father and the Son appeared, and the Father said, ". . . This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith 2:17.) If the youth of the Church have this testimony in their souls, they would not have any difficulties in understanding what they should do to live the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As I read the history of Joseph Smith and all the great events that took place, I am impressed with the fact that he was a young man. At the age of twenty-two he received the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood. When he reached twenty-four, 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon were printed which were available to the world. When he was

twenty-five years of age, the Church was moved to Kirtland, and there he ordained the first bishop. At the age of twenty-seven, he received the revelation on the Word of Wisdom. One hundred and twenty-seven years ago, he received that marvelous revelation. At the age of twenty-seven he commenced the erection of a temple. At the age of twenty-nine he chose twelve apostles. At the age of thirty he dedicated the Kirtland Temple. When that great event took place, there were visions, there were angels, the Christ appeared to him, and there were Moses, Elias, and Elijah who bestowed their keys of authority on him. These events made it possible for all the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father who had lived over the hundreds of years gone by to enjoy all of these blessings. When he was thirty-two years of age the Church had to move into Missouri. At that time, he received the marvelous revelation on tithing. Youth ought to be aware of the fact that the law of tithing came through revelation. When the Prophet Joseph Smith was thirty-two years of age, another great event took place and that was to give the Church its name. None of the great leaders or organizers of other churches have ever attempted to say, "This is the Church of Jesus Christ." They may take the name of Luther. They may take the names of others. The revelation given to the Prophet in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 115, verse 4 said, "For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Youth ought to know why this great organization carries that sacred name—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

At the age of thirty-four, this young man sent nine apostles into England to preach the gospel. As a result of their work, literally thousands of people from Great Britain have joined the Church. During the last three years, our Prophet dedicated temples in London, New Zealand, and Switzerland for the benefit of the people in those countries. Recently, Elder Harold B. Lee was in far-off England, and there he organized a stake in the Manchester area. The

Lord intends that all his people, regardless of where they are, are to have the same privileges and opportunities that were revealed to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The youth of the Church should know more about Joseph Smith and of these great historical events that have taken place so that they will have in their souls a testimony that Joseph Smith actually saw the Father and the Son, that the establishment of the Church came through revelation, not coming to a man because of his own ideas but because of the plan of the Lord for us in these the latter days. Youth should know that this young man at the age of thirty-six made it possible for all of us to receive what is called endowments. The youth should understand and know what these endowments are. Fathers and mothers, that is your responsibility, and mine, to teach them of these sacred things. At the age of thirty-seven, the Prophet Joseph received the revelation on the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. Youth should know about the new and everlasting covenant of marriage whereby youth may have the opportunity of going into the house of the Lord and being sealed for time and eternity. That is our responsibility. At the age of thirty-eight, he sealed his testimony of the restoration of the Church and the gospel of Jesus Christ with his blood.

I pray that youth will be able to testify of these historical events and know the truth of the words found in Moses 1:39, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

May the Lord continue to bless you as the parents of youth, to bless all of us that, in turn, we may be a great source of inspiration and guidance to them, I humbly ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin has just addressed us. Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Mark E. Petersen.