

I am quite blunt) I wouldn't want to hurt you, and I ask your forgiveness.

I bear testimony to you that I love the Lord. He has been so good to me that I owe him everything. I know that God lives, that he hears my prayers and your prayers. I couldn't get along a day if I could not go to him. One of the most peaceful experiences in my life is when I follow Elder Romney's admonition, when I can find a spot alone. I endorse that to you. It will give you strength, peace, comfort, inspiration, and greater faith.

I bear testimony to you that I know Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, as I know President David O. McKay is a prophet of God. There isn't a day that I do not pray for President McKay—a number of times, and for every one of these General Authorities, with no exception. I regard them as prophets of God and servants of the Lord. Would you ever want to speak unkindly about a servant of the Lord? Not ever again, if you ever have.

May the Lord bless us that we may be strong and that we may move forward with the Church. The Church is growing fast, and if we want to keep up we will have to do likewise.

God bless you. May he watch over us all and give us the strength and the faith to do as he would have us do, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

We have just listened to Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson, recently released as one of the Presiding Bishopric and sustained this day as one of the Assistants to the Twelve.

The combined choral groups and congregation will now sing, "Come, O Thou King of Kings," conducted by David Austin Shand. After the singing Elder LeGrand Richards will speak to us.

The Combined Choral Groups and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Come, O Thou King of Kings."

**President David O. McKay:**

Our next speaker is Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Sill.

## ELDER LEGRAND RICHARDS

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

I feel it a great honor and privilege, my brethren and sisters, to have an opportunity of attending this conference with you. I love the Saints of Zion. I thank the Lord for my association with my brethren of the General Authorities.

I think it would be appropriate today if I should pay my tribute of love and respect to Bishop Wirthlin and Bishop Isaacson. As the Presiding Bishop of the Church, I was privileged to select counselors from all the priesthood of the Church, and I selected them without any duress or guidance, except the Spirit of the Lord, and they were wonderful counselors, and I love them and pray the Lord always to be with and bless them. I love Brother Buehner, too, and I welcome these new men who have been sustained today as General Au-

thorities. I am sure they will do a great work.

I am very happy to know of the great progress the Church is making in the missionary field. I am sure we were all thrilled this morning in hearing the report given by President Moyle of the great upsurge and increase in baptisms. I think I have been a missionary nearly all my life. When I was just a little fellow, I remember attending a ward meeting where two missionaries, returning from the Southern States, gave their report. I do not know whether they said anything unusual or not, but if they did not, the Lord did something unusual for me, because when I left that meeting I felt that I could have walked to any mission field in the world, if I had just had a call, and so I went home

and got down on my knees and asked the Lord to help me to live worthy to go on a mission when I was old enough to go.

Because of this desire, I used to carry my little New Testament around with me often and memorize scripture. I have had a wonderful opportunity in missionary work.

As many of you know, I have had the privilege of filling four missions and presiding over two and touring many of them, and I have tested this Church and its teachings in every way that I think it can be tested, and my testimony increases day by day, and I have never found that its teachings were wanting in any way.

The Lord has established his Church according to the promises of the prophets and according to the blueprint prepared by him as contained in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price.

I could tell you some wonderful experiences that I have had in meeting people not of us; for instance, when I was in Holland on my first mission in the city of Utrecht, they had a seminar where they taught young men to prepare for the ministry, and they used to come and attend our meetings, and then they would remain sometimes for hours at a time to ask questions, and we found that they did not have the answers; for instance, one of them said to me, "You cannot prove that baptism should be by immersion." I said, "Yes, I can."

"Well," he asked, "how?"

I said, "You have studied some Greek, haven't you?" and he admitted that he had, and I said, "What does the word *baptizo* mean?"

He said, "Immerse."

I said, "Why don't you do it?"

Then he asked me this question. "Do you think the Lord will hold us accountable if we teach things that we know are not in harmony with the Bible?"

"Well," I said, "I would rather let the Apostle Paul answer that question," and I quoted what Paul said:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached

unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8.)

"Now," I said, "let your conscience be your guide when you are teaching things that you know are not in harmony with the scriptures."

There was an article that appeared some years ago in a pamphlet that Brother Orson F. Whitney wrote, entitled, "The Strength of the Mormon Position." This is a statement by a noted member of the Catholic Church, and I think it has something very important in it that those of us interested in missionary work could well give a little thought to, and I would like to read it to you. He said:

"Many years ago a learned man, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, came to Utah and spoke from the stand of the Salt Lake Tabernacle. I became well-acquainted with him, and we conversed freely and frankly. A great scholar, with perhaps a dozen languages at his tongue's end, he seemed to know all about theology, law, literature, science, and philosophy. One day he said to me: 'You Mormons are all ignoramuses. You don't even know the strength of your own position. It is so strong that there is only one other tenable in the whole Christian world, and that is the position of the Catholic Church. The issue is between Catholicism and Mormonism. If we are right, you are wrong; if you are right, we are wrong; and that's all there is to it. The Protestants haven't a leg to stand on. For, if we are wrong, they are wrong with us, since they were a part of us and went out from us; while if we are right, they are apostates whom we cut off long ago. If we have the apostolic succession from St. Peter, as we claim, there was no need of Joseph Smith and Mormonism; but if we have not that succession, then such a man as Joseph Smith was necessary, and Mormonism's attitude is the only consistent one. It is either the perpetuation of the gospel from ancient times, or the restoration of the gospel in latter days.'" (A *Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, LeGrand Richards, pp. 3-4.)

Now, if every Christian in the world could accept that and then decide which is right, we would just gather them in

by the millions if they were willing to obey the commandments. Some of them are not, as you know, after they become converted. We have thousands of people converted to Mormonism who have never had the courage yet to accept it, but they believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God.

This is only in harmony with the scriptures. You remember what Paul said: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," (Eph. 4:5); in other words, one Lord, one Church, and one baptism. How could there be more than one Church that God our Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ could approve, because they must not conflict with each other, for surely the Lord cannot be divided against himself? You know what Jesus said, that a house divided against itself cannot stand. So there can only be one Church of Jesus Christ in all the world.

That does not mean that all these Protestant churches have no good in them, when they teach people to pray and they teach them to try to live right. You and I could go out and organize a Church. That is why we have hundreds of them, because they are churches of men, just like civic organizations and other institutions organized by men to help people to do things that are worthwhile, but no man can organize a church with divine authority and power to bind on earth and it shall be bound in heaven except they are called by God the Eternal Father and ordained to his priesthood. That is what Jesus meant when he said to the Council of the Twelve:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you. . . ." (John 15:16.)

". . . and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. . . ." (Matthew 16:19.)

Ordinances performed, no matter if there are thousands of churches, will not be recognized in the heavens until God has endowed that church with that divine power to bind on earth, and it shall be bound in heaven. Of course, the Lord will reward all people for all the good they do, but according to this statement, it is either the perpetuation of the gospel of Christ from his day or

it is a restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. That is why we are not Catholics, and we are not Protestants. We believe in a restoration of the gospel.

If the Bible is true, it cannot be a perpetuation of the gospel from the days of Jesus Christ. I will just read you one or two references. Here is one from Paul:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." (2 Thess. 2:1-2.)

Now remember, this is long after Jesus had gone to the Father and completed his earthly mission.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 2:3.)

Now, that means no perpetuation, does it not, of the gospel, but a falling away which would require a restoration?

One more statement from Paul:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. 4:3-4.)

Then there are many more in the scriptures such as Amos, where he says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." (Amos 8:11-12.)

Jesus said, ". . . seek and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7), and why could they not find it? Because there was a famine in the land for hearing the word of God, and when the word of God cannot be found anywhere, what does that imply? It implies the need of a restoration, does it not?

So we come to that point.

Peter is the one that they claim to follow, and yet Peter, you remember, in talking to those who put to death the Christ, said:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.)

According to the Apostle Peter, there had to come a falling away in order that there could be a restitution. That is just as simple as ABC.

I should not think it would be hard for any Christian to recognize the fact that the choice is between one of two churches, and then if we turn to the scriptures to determine which of the two it is, there should be no difficulty in reaching a correct decision.

We come again to the statement of John when he was banished upon the Isle of Patmos. You remember the angel said:

"... Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." (Rev. 4:1.) And then he saw "... another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel" (*ibid.*, 14:6), that is the only gospel that can save men, "... to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people" (*Idem*) indicating that no one in the world would be in possession of that everlasting gospel.

If the gospel were to endure from the days of Christ, why should the angel come? It seems incredible that we have no report or account of angels visiting the earth any more, and yet angels are nothing more than servants of the Lord. You remember how Gabriel was sent to Zacharias to tell him about how his wife Elizabeth would have a son, and he would be called John, and how the Angel Gabriel came to Mary to tell her about the wonderful thing the Lord had planned for her. We do not read of any angels any more among any of the churches, and I

wonder what the world thinks angels really are. When we see them depicted today, they have wings on them.

I would like to read you a few words from Revelation 22:9. After John had seen all the marvelous things that were shown unto him by the angel, he fell down to worship at his feet, and the angel said unto him:

"... See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." (*Ibid.*, 22:9.)

In other words, when the "fellow-servants," and of thy brethren the prophets" leave this earth, that does not mean that their work is completed, because the Lord rules in the heavens above, and he rules upon the earth beneath, and his servants are sent back from time to time in order to work out his program that his promises might be fulfilled. As Jesus said:

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21:32-33.)

There are so many statements in the Bible that prove that there should be a restoration of the everlasting gospel before the promised second coming of the Christ, that one could not possibly believe in the Bible and believe in a perpetuation of the truth.

I want to leave with you one other thought that has impressed me greatly. It is reported that one of our national radio commentators made this statement. He said he was asked what message could be broadcast to the world which would be considered greater than any other message. He said, after giving it consideration, he decided that to be able to say to the world that a man who had lived upon this earth and died had returned again with a message from God would be the greatest message that could be broadcast to the world. We are the only people in the world that have such a message as that.

We have even erected a great monument in the state of New York to the honor of such a man, Moroni, who came back with a message from God.

Saturday, September 30

Second Day

Just think of all the messengers who have come back in the "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21), as Peter promised before Christ can come again. And who were they? Angels. And who are angels? Servants of the Lord, "fellow-servants like unto thyself," as the angel said to John when he went to kneel down to worship him. (See Rev. 22:9.)

In closing, I would like to read the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, received in Hiram, Ohio, on February 16, 1832, and I bear you my testimony that this is true:

"And while we meditated upon these things, the Lord touched the eyes of our understandings and they were opened, and the glory of the Lord shone round about.

"And we beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fulness;

"And saw the holy angels, and them who are sanctified before his throne, worshipping God, and the Lamb, who worship him forever and ever.

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." (D&C 76:19-24.)

I thank God for the testimony in my soul that I am his son and that Jesus is my Elder Brother and that he is the Creator of heaven and earth and that he has revealed himself to the earth in this day and that messengers have returned with a message from God and hence we have the greatest message that could possibly be broadcast to this world, and I bear you that witness in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

He to whom you have just listened is Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. I am going to tell you something. Brother Sill approached me just before this meeting started and he said he has one speech one minute long and he has another fifteen minutes long. He said, "You tell me which you want." I believe, Brother Sill, we will take the one minute.

Elder Benson will follow him.

## ELDER STERLING W. SILL

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My brothers and sisters, I appreciate this semiannual privilege of having a part with you in the general conference of the Church.

Someone has said that the greatest invention of all time took place at Platea, 2,500 years ago, when an obscure Greek perfected the process of marching men in step. When it was discovered that a great group of individuals could co-ordinate their efforts and focus them effectively upon a single objective, that day civilization began.

The Master himself emphasized this important ability when he said to his disciples, "... if ye are not one ye are

not mine." (D&C 38:27.) Then the greatest intelligence of heaven gave the most important success formula ever given, saying, "Follow me . . ." (Matt. 4:19.) And every human soul must finally be judged by how well he obeys that single command.

May God help us I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

I like a man who is true to his word! Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.