

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric has just spoken to us. The Congregation and Chorus will now join in singing, "Come, O Thou King of Kings," conducted by Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen. After the singing, Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson will address us.

Singing by the Relief Society Singing Mothers and the congregation, "Come, O Thou King of Kings."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve.

ELDER THORPE B. ISAACSON*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

President McKay, President Moyle, President Brown, President Smith, and brethren of the General Authorities, my dear brothers and sisters and friends:

When one occupies this position, he is very anxious that he might say something that would be appropriate and fitting. I sincerely pray that what I might say may be thought-provoking and appropriate. I can assure you that there is always much prayer and great fasting that precedes a conference such as this. These wonderful Singing Mothers do something to us and for us. They are beautiful to see and beautiful to hear. We pray that their husbands and their families who are home will be well and protected until they return. Surely they must be proud of them.

Truly these are perilous and critical and very unusual times, both on the local, national, and international level. There are many problems that are confusing, and the right answer to these problems is always difficult to find.

Abraham Lincoln, when he was President, had problems, and it was very difficult for him to find the answer. May I refer you to one experience among many that he had and the method that he used in the solution of this problem? I quote: "General Sickles had noticed that before the battle of Gettysburg, upon the result of which, perhaps, the fate of this nation hung, President Lincoln was apparently free from the oppressive care which frequently weighed him down. After it was all past, the general asked President Lincoln how it was that he felt so free from the oppressive care previously noticeable. He answered:

"Well, I will tell you how it was. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of affairs, I went to my room one day and I locked the door and I got down on my knees before Almighty God and prayed to him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told him this war was his war and our cause was his cause, but we could not stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. Then and there I made a solemn vow to Almighty God that if he would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by him. After that, I don't know how it was, and I cannot explain it, but soon a sweet comfort crept into my soul. The feeling that God had taken this whole business into his own hands and that things would go right at Gettysburg, and that is why I had no fears about you."

It would be well if all of us in our respective appointments and responsibilities would get down on our knees and ask Almighty God to guide us, whether we be in government service or education; whether we be in business, industry or church work. It may be that as individuals we may become too self-sufficient and rely on our own wisdom; if so, we are likely to fail.

I quote from General Douglas MacArthur, wherein he is reported to have said, in the same vein as President Lincoln used: "General MacArthur, speaking, gave thanks to God, who he said, 'Has so often guided me through the shadow of death and who nerved me in my hours of lonely vigil and deadly decisions.'"

Following are parts of an article regarding another great American, a living President, President Herbert Hoover, who is a deeply religious man: "After the Supreme Court had issued its controversial edict regarding prayers in the public schools, Mr. Hoover stated that he was shocked and incensed. Newspaper reporters asked him for a comment, and he had given them an emphatic dissent, which made the front pages of most of the newspapers."

And I am quoting now from President Hoover: "I consider the Court ruling a disintegration of the basic rights and traditions of the American people."

The reporter asked him if there was anything he would like to say to the American people at this time of perplexity and worry and danger.

"Yes, there is," said President Hoover. "I want to say that despite our troubles and the implacable enemies in many parts of the world who threaten our way of life, America will come through. We will come through because we have the best form of Government men have ever devised. We have great creative and productive genius because we have freedom and the courage to protect it, and, above all, we will come through because we believe in God. That is a priceless advantage that our 'atheistic' enemies do not have."

President Hoover's statement should be held sacred to all Americans, particularly, and I repeat again his statement, "We have freedom and the courage to protect it, and, above all, because we believe in God. That is a priceless advantage that our 'atheistic' enemies do not have." Therefore, every American should appreciate this priceless gift and not alone believe in God but accept his teachings and accept the principles of truth.

Ralph Waldo Emerson had this to say: "The true test of civilization is not the census or the size of the cities, nor the crops, nor the wealth; Not But the kind of men the country produces."

That reminds us again of Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, General Douglas MacArthur, Thomas Jefferson, Woodrow Wilson, and many others. Will it be said of this nation in years to come that men such as these have

been produced by our generation?

Now again with reference to the ruling of the Supreme Court referred to, and I am quoting from an opinion survey entitled, "Vast Majority of Parents Favor Public School Religion." These findings came to light in a nationwide survey on one of the most controversial domestic issues of recent years. The following question was asked of the group most directly involved, the parents, who will be sending their children to public elementary and high schools this year. Here is the question:

"Do you approve or disapprove religious observances in public schools?"

Eighty percent of the parents said, "Yes, we approve religious observances in public schools." Fourteen percent stated that they disapproved and six percent had no opinion.

That will give us hope, provided the parents will follow through and make this part of their lives and the lives of their children.

Now to gain some idea as to what religious observances go on in the home, the survey asked this opinion of parents regarding the saying of grace before meals. Here is the question:

"At your family meals at home, does anyone say grace, or give thanks to God aloud, before the meals?"

Sixty-nine percent of the American homes said, "Yes, we say grace." Thirty-one percent said, "We do not say grace."

When the views of all the people of this survey, not just the parents of public school children, but everyone taken into consideration, here is how the survey divides on the question of religious observances in public schools:

Seventy-nine percent approves religion in public schools; fourteen percent disapproves, and seven percent has no opinion.

Here again we have great hope.

Quoting from another prominent man whose name I do not recall at this time, speaking on the subject, "This Nation Under God": "Our way of life has been guarded by men of granite with Bible in hand, but we stand to lose this way of life through the neglect of our devotion to God and his truth."

Now quoting from another prominent newspaper on "The Right to Pray":

"Readers have shown their dismay over the Supreme Court's decision regarding prayer in the public schools. They have voiced their apprehension that this decision will open the door for still further rulings against public expressions of the belief in God, on which this country was founded."

When the Supreme Court rendered their decision, the writer states: "I feared the implication that would follow." And then he goes farther, and I quote: "Now comes word that another certain organization is prepared to challenge the 'Under God' provision in the Pledge of Allegiance."

The seriousness of this may go on and on, and I further quote from him: "I deplore and decry this outrageous stand and I will do everything humanly possible to fight any repeal of this acknowledgement of our abiding faith in God. Everything possible should be done in behalf of the constitutional amendment legalizing the right of the people to publicly express their belief in God through nonsectarian prayer or the simple affirmation of faith contained in the Pledge of Allegiance."

The President of the United States after that ruling was made encouraged the people of this country to engage themselves more fervently in prayer.

I quote further from a very prominent Australian physician, who makes a personal appeal, wherein he stated, "Every American should also establish a personal relationship to God, to country, and to freedom."

Prime Minister Macmillan made a statement as he addressed a prominent audience, and I quote from him: "Materially, we must try to create a philosophy that is not only anti-Communist but which is positive and dynamic—believing that the true brotherhood of man can stem only from sincere belief in the fatherhood of God."

I think we are all very proud of that statement coming from Prime Minister Macmillan.

Now I know that God is our Father. I know that he lives. I am wondering just what our forebears would think of us. As a boy I was fortunate enough to have teachers, and although I do not remember many things they taught me, I do remember seeing those teachers in

front of that class bowing their heads and asking God to bless us. I am very grateful for the faith of those teachers.

I am very grateful that prayer has been the foundation, not alone of this Church, but also of this nation.

What can we do? We can do as the President of the United States has asked us to do—that we, ourselves, devote ourselves more humbly, more generally to the principle of prayer.

May God bless us that we may set the example, that we shall have the courage to stand for those things that we know are right.

I am grateful for the message of our President this morning. I am only sorry that there are so many people of the Church and who are not of the Church that have not had the pleasure and the privilege and the blessing of knowing and seeing and shaking hands and visiting with the prophet of God, our beloved President David O. McKay, whom we regard without any reservations as a great man in his own right, and a spiritual leader, a servant of God. I testify to you that I know that God speaks to him and to the prophets of God in this age as well as he did to the prophets of old.

May we have the strength to extend our love and our friendship to those who perhaps need encouragement! I am thinking now of a very wonderful man in this Church who had a brother who was inactive in the Church for years. The brother who was active was sorry for him and tried every way he could to help him, but to no avail. Fortunately, the inactive brother moved into a new ward. When his name was read out in that congregation, the bishop of that ward recognized the name and called his brother, whom he knew, that night and said, "Was he your brother who just moved into our ward?" The man said, "Yes, he is my brother, and I am going to tell you something. I do not know whether he will come to church or not because he has some habits that keep him away from church." This bishop said, "But he was here today." Then the brother said to the bishop, "Will you do everything you can for him?" And the bishop said, "Of course, I will." We have some wonderful bishops in this Church.

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The bishop did. He called that man in and talked to him, and the man said, "I cannot become active. I do not know that I can come to church regularly." The bishop asked him why. He said, "Because I have some habits that I cannot quit." The bishop talked to him as any bishop would. He said to the man, "Oh, I think you can quit. What is the first one?"

"Well," he said, "I have smoked for many years, and I can't quit it."

The bishop said, "Oh, yes, you can, because I will help you."

This man was grateful to the bishop and said, "What can you do, bishop?"

"Will you try to quit today?" the bishop asked.

"Yes, I will quit today."

"Then," the bishop said, "I will fast and pray for you."

"Would you do this for me, Bishop?" the man asked.

"Yes," replied the bishop, "I would do that for you."

The bishop did fast and pray for several days for this man, and I do not need to tell you that the man has not indulged since the fasting of that wonderful bishop.

God bless you bishops that you may take that same interest in those men who need you, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brothers and sisters, I pray that I may have the Spirit of the Lord with me as I speak to you this afternoon. I bring you love and greetings from the missionaries and Saints of the eight eastern American missions.

As I travel throughout the Church, members continually ask me this question: "Tell me more about the new missionary program. Do converts really understand the gospel and are they staying in the Church?"

My brothers and sisters, as we have heard here today, this is not a new missionary plan—it is in effect the simple plan which was used by Peter, Paul, Joseph Smith, Wilford Woodruff, Parley P. Pratt, and other outstanding missionaries throughout the history of the Church in all dispensations. Great missionaries have been characterized by their simplicity and their directness. The Savior has told us that this is a day of warning and not a day of many words. (See D&C 63:58.)

Thus, Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was Christ and him crucified. They were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them—"Repent, and be bap-

tized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. . . ." (See Acts 2:37-38.)

Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Savior has given us this charge, ". . . go among this people, and say unto them, like unto mine apostle of old, whose name was Peter:

"Believe on the name of the Lord Jesus, . . .

"Repent and be baptized. . . ." (D&C 49:11-13.)

Our beloved Prophet David O. McKay, has counseled that every member should be a missionary.

Right here in Salt Lake City, a stake missionary while eating lunch at a counter met a young tourist en route to the Seattle Fair. He asked him what he knew about the Mormon Church, and if he would like to know more. He said he would like to know more. During the next few days the stake missionaries gave him the six discussions. He postponed his trip to Seattle and was baptized.

The Savior has said that the first great commandment is to love the Lord, and the second is to love our neighbors as ourselves. There is no better way to evidence our love to our Heavenly