

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

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It is a very great honor but a sobering responsibility to undertake to address this vast audience, seen and unseen; the kind of responsibility that causes a man humbly to seek divine guidance and assistance, especially if he would talk of God and of truth.

Let us read the words of the Savior as recorded in the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John:

“. . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32.)

And again in the 17th chapter of John, he said:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (*Ibid.*, 17:3.)

The first scripture quoted is a promise that if we continue in his word we shall know the truth and gain freedom; and the second, that it is life eternal to know God. Each of these scriptures envisions and requires an eternal quest; because gaining a complete knowledge of truth, or of God, is an infinite undertaking.

It has been repeatedly stated in the conference thus far by the speakers, that we live in tremendous times—we live in the most significant period in the records of the human race. This is confirmed by our best scholars throughout the world, as they review for us the historic evolutions, revolutions, and reformations of the past. Civilized people everywhere are becoming aware of the ever-expanding complexity of our civilization and of the almost miraculous advancement and improvement in the fields of travel and communication, not only on an international but on an interplanetary basis. This knowledge causes us to refer to our time and our accomplishments as, in modern vernacular, “out of this world.” That phrase becomes almost literal.

In the midst of the rapid and unprecedented advance and discovery in many branches of science, we ask you,

is it not reasonable to expect some new activity, some new thought, some new revelation in the most important dimension of human life, the spiritual dimension?

A. Paul Davis tells us, “The world is too dangerous for anything but truth and too small for anything but brotherhood.” There must be social, moral, and spiritual solidarity in a world which is in hourly danger of extinction by bombs, missiles, and atomic fallout.

Many people, including some students and scholars, are unaware of the fact that also in the fields of theology and religion there have been revolutionary changes of thought, and they are of even greater consequence—greater because this area embraces all other fields of interest and activity.

The most intriguing and significant aspect of a man's search for truth is his continuing and compelling attempt to explain himself and his relation to the universe which envelops him, to find the cause behind the phenomena of life. The questions of whence and why and whither have persisted through the ages.

Any open-minded search for truth requires courage, constancy, and humility. To quote an ancient prayer:

“From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth,
From the laziness that is content with half truth,
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,
O God of truth, deliver us.”

Any thoughtful, prayerful search for truth reveals that God is our Father, and that he is a person, that his glory is intelligence, and that he has a will, a purpose, and a plan in creating the universe and providing for man's earth life.

God is more than personality as we know it; he is that in perfect degree which our best is in imperfect degree. To have faith in a personal God, who can be referred to as “Father” gives

man a sense of dignity and holds before him an ideal toward which to strive. Continuing in that faith one gets progressive answers to the disturbing questions of source, purpose, and destiny.

In Bible times, the prophets were the leaders of thought. In a sense they were the spiritual scientists who tapped the inexhaustible reservoirs of truth through the simple media of direct revelation from God.

True religion is a vital function in human living, and its teachers and disciples should seek, understand, and advocate revealed truth. This truth demands our allegiance and will lead men to the promised freedom.

If religion is to keep pace with other human interests and refute the false charges of communism that there is no God, that Christ is a myth, that religion is an opiate, we must re-examine our prescribed beliefs as set forth in formulated creeds; we must compare our organizations and procedures and our theology with the teachings of the Holy Bible. Let us seek to find a church with an organization that is identical with that set up in the New Testament.

And in our search for truth, we must purge ourselves of prejudice, for that closes the mind. Prejudice has been defined as "a vagrant opinion without visible means of support." Let us return then to a prayerful study of the Old and the New Testament, and have faith in the God of the Holy Bible who was known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as Jehovah, and to Peter, John, and Paul as the Messiah. Such a study will reveal that God is not a sovereign autocrat, but a loving, personal Father. This belief in the universal Fatherhood of God forms the basis for our faith in the universal brotherhood of man.

You, our friends who are listening to or attending the proceedings of this conference, no doubt ask what is the Mormon creed. Although we announce no formal creed, the founder and first president of the Church did set forth as an epitome of the tenets of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, thirteen concise statements known as the Articles of Faith. These include fundamental and characteristic gospel doctrine as taught by the Church of Jesus

Christ in former days. The first of these articles declares:

"We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost."

That statement should reassure some of our friends who have wondered whether or not the Mormons are Christians.

That these articles are not, and were not intended to be, a complete and final exposition of beliefs is evidenced by the fact that we receive and expect continued revelation. In fact, we say in another Article of Faith:

"We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."—Ninth Article of Faith.

These articles are authoritative; however, they form but an outline for the study of the theology of the Church.

Theology as a science has been defined as that branch of classified knowledge which deals with God and man, their relationship and their co-operative purpose. While theology may appeal primarily to the intellect, religion touches the heart, and it inspires men to live in accordance with the knowledge gained. Theology may be only diction, but religion requires action. Religion is man's endeavor to adapt himself to the facts of existence as revealed by the Author and Creator of all that is. It differs from other such endeavors in that it seeks the adaptation of the whole of life to ultimate facts.

Now, as God is the fountain of truth and knowledge, the source of wisdom, and as theology and religion are primarily concerned with the existence of and our relationship to Deity, does it not seem obvious that this combined subject, theology and religion, when accurately defined and understood, is the queen of all the sciences? It embraces all truth and therefore includes all other sciences.

It deals with man's origin, purpose, and destiny, with the principles governing the creation of worlds, with God's eternal laws which are often called the laws of nature. God himself has from the beginning been the Great Scientist, and he has taught men by personal

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manifestations as well as by ministrations of his appointed servants.

But here as elsewhere, when the student comes to the edge of knowledge, he must lean on faith and continue his quest. He must "trust the soul's invincible surmise," as did Columbus. If science is built upon facts, its architect is faith.

As Dr. Talmage has eloquently said, "Though the veil of mortality with all its obscurity may shut the light of the divine presence from the sinful heart, that separating curtain may be drawn aside and a heavenly light may shine into the righteous soul. By the listening ear attuned to the celestial music, the voice of God has been heard declaring his personality and will; to the eye that is freed from the moats and beams of sin, single in its search after truth, the hand of God has been made visible; within the soul properly purified by devotion and humility, the mind of God has been revealed."

The honest investigator must be prepared to follow wherever the search of truth may lead. Truth is often found in the most unexpected places. He must, with fearless and open mind "insist that facts are far more important than any cherished, mistaken beliefs, no matter how unpleasant the facts or how delightful the beliefs."

Quoting Lowell:

"New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward,
who would keep abreast of Truth:"

As God is our Father and the source of all truth, as we are all primarily interested in attaining eternal life and as it is eternal life to know him, surely an open-minded and courageous study of him and his divine plan with respect to our salvation will be the most interesting and permanently rewarding of all ventures into the vast realms which invite man's questing spirit. It was doubtless a contemplation of this majestic theme that gave us the rhapsody recorded in John. He said:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him;

for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.)

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ which we proclaim, when understood and accepted, will unite all men in a common cause, and then only will all new scientific discoveries be utilized for the benefit of mankind. Then we shall have peace. A knowledge of truth will help men to be free, whether it come by direct revelation as in the case of the prophets, from the written word of God as recorded in the scriptures, revealed as a result of research in the laboratory, in the flight of the astronaut as he circles the globe, or as revealed to a prayerful youth upon his knees in the sanctuary of a grove.

Religion has to do not only with the internal life of man, but with his eternal life, which will be a continuation of identity and personality into the spiritual realm of immortality. Religion gives meaning, purpose, and direction to man's insatiable quest, his instinctive curiosity, and inspires in him a desire for greater awareness of himself, of his universe, and of God. The prayerful searcher after truth will, as Shakespeare said,

"Find tongues in trees, books in running brooks,

"Sermons in stones and good in everything." (*As You Like It.*)

Man is ever wrestling with the problems of how to organize his reactions and find peace amidst the diverse and confusing experiences which crowd in upon the daily activities of his body, mind, and spirit. Religion is the means by which a man may achieve tranquility of spirit without internal anguish or external disaster.

The basic and fundamental doctrine of the primitive Church came through revelation from God the Father through Jesus Christ his Son. His life among men on earth, his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, all proclaim the eternal fact that he was and is personal and material, and to that we humbly bear witness. He was a babe born of woman, he matured through childhood and youth, and, as the Apostle Paul said:

". . . being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all

them that obey him; . . ." (Hebrews 5:9.)

He was and is Jehovah, God the Son, a separate identity working in complete oneness with Elohim, God the Father, in whose likeness man was created.

The announcement of new and continued revelation from God is more momentous, more reassuring and challenging in national and international affairs today than any of the discoveries of atomic energy or the amazing achievements of scientists.

We must seek to know God's word and will concerning us individually and collectively, and to this end we need not rely wholly on the written word given to people of another age. Each succeeding prophet added something to the revelations of the past. While much of that word is applicable to our time and condition, we announce to you, our friends, humbly but with a sincerity born of the witness of the Spirit, that God's word is revealed to men today, as anciently, through his own appointed servants. We proclaim a new revelation from the heavens, a new vision and understanding of God and of Jesus Christ his Son, a new interpretation of truth, and also a new delegation of authority from God to man. Continued revelation places religion in the vanguard of human progress. We proclaim the opening, under divine guidance, of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, that which was mentioned by the Apostle Peter:

"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: . . ." (Eph. 1:10.)

A poet of this dispensation said, hopefully:

"The morning breaks; the shadows flee;
Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!
The dawning of a brighter day,
Majestic rises on the world."

—Parley P. Pratt

The vital and dynamic message of Mormonism is that there is a personal God in the heavens. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He has not abated his power; he has not surrendered his sovereignty; he has not diluted his love; he changes not; and

his plans never fail. We bear witness that his chief executive officer in the creation and direction of the affairs of this and other worlds is Jesus Christ the Lord, the Redeemer of the World, the Son of the Father.

The foundation of this Church rests upon the bedrock of revelation. The character, personality, and purposes of God have been again revealed to the world. The kingdom of God has been set up as predicted by Daniel and other prophets. An angel has flown in the midst of heaven in the latter days in confirmation of John's vision recorded in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, where he said:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev. 14:6-7.)

Our friends, either this solemn statement is true or it is false. If it is true, it is the most important announcement since the resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Christ. If it is false it will, of course, with all other falsehood, come to naught. That it is true we humbly testify, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is President Hugh B. Brown, Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. Following a brief Tabernacle Organ interlude for station identification, the Choir and Congregation will join in singing "How Firm A Foundation."

Following an organ interlude the congregation and the Choir joined in singing the hymn, "How Firm A Foundation."

President David O. McKay:

We shall now hear from Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve.