

PRESIDENT HENRY D. MOYLE

First Counselor in the First Presidency

I believe with all my heart and soul that the solution to our problems here upon this earth today and tomorrow is to be found in the knowledge and appreciation of man's relationship to God, his dependence upon God, and his obedience to God's laws.

The world is not just a watch that the Lord wound up and left to run down. By the exercise of faith men can call upon God and obtain his help in fulfillment of the promises he has made. Also, of his own volition, God intervenes and controls the affairs of men, of nations, and the very elements that make up the universe when this is necessary for the preservation of his divine purposes.

In speaking of the divine purposes of the Lord, Paul wrote, "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.)

Modern scripture tells us through the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Now the purpose in Himself (that is Christ) in the winding up scene of the last dispensation is that all things pertaining to that dispensation should be conducted precisely in accordance with preceding dispensations." (DHC, 4:208.)

Christ's example and precept set in what is known as the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time control us today in our behavior and in our belief. "We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church. . . . 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."

I have just quoted the sixth and ninth Articles of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. How startling are the following words of Peter:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, . . ." (2 Peter 1:19. Italics added.)

Prophecy and revelation came from the same source to Peter and also to Joseph Smith who gave us our Articles of Faith.

It is no different today from what it was in the days of Peter and Paul, the apostles of old. Paul told the Romans that "the gospel of (Jesus) Christ: . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . ." (Romans 1:16.) Incorporated in this term salvation is not only the spiritual but also the temporal phase of our lives. We cannot disassociate mortal man from the eternal spirit of man within him. It is, therefore, through obedience to the laws of God that we will find the answer to our questions, whether they be domestic, political, social, economic, or spiritual.

I give to you today my assurance that evidence, if not conclusive proof, of this fact is to be found by studying the scriptures. Christ's admonition to his disciples is compelling upon all of us today. Sooner or later in life we are brought to face some crisis which requires us to determine for ourselves: Do we desire to follow the direction Christ gave to all men during his earthly ministry? If we must sooner or later choose which path we are to pursue, why should we procrastinate, why not do it now?

As we determine our course in life, we may well remember Paul's sermon on faith, delivered to the Hebrews:

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, . . .

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:1, 3, 6.)

Through our faith in God we can accomplish life's full purpose.

Christ in his Sermon on the Mount, given early in his ministry, as recorded in Matthew, said: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;

and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.)

And then he added a little later: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (*Ibid.*, 7:7-8.)

We fulfil our highest potentials when we receive the joy and security and knowledge which come from the witness of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who teaches us all things essential for this life and ultimately for our eternal exaltation in the kingdom of God.

Paul declared to the Corinthians: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12:3.)

When the testimony of the Holy Ghost is borne in upon our conscience, and we know that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, the Redeemer of all mankind, the Son of the Living God, we have the promise of life eternal. Christ declared to the world: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

This is a matter about which we need not be left in doubt. *We know.* This knowledge is priceless. The principles of the gospel can be understood and lived by all mankind. The laws and ordinances of the gospel are simple; they are natural. They are appreciated by all who accept and conform their lives thereto. Not all men can acquire the riches of the world, but the blessings of the Lord will overtake all who seek after them. Like the acquisition of anything worthwhile it takes effort to attain the spiritual. Faith, dedication, and devotion must be ours to bring ourselves closer and closer to our Heavenly Father. We enjoy our communion with God here and now in mortality. We do not need to wait for immortality to enjoy the fruits of our spiritual labors. We learn to appreciate the Spirit of God more and more as we draw nearer to the Lord in the keeping of his com-

mandments. The harder we knock, the wider is the door opened.

What would it mean to all of us to appreciate that we are never left alone to rely upon our own resources; that we have the sustaining power and influence of our Heavenly Father constantly with us to guide and direct us throughout our lives in all our righteous activities. Those who keep the commandments of God realize this blessing indeed. We know, and our missionaries know. It is this knowledge which urges us on to help others with an enthusiasm born of the Spirit of our Father in heaven.

It was not until The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in 1830 that the population of this planet reached one billion living persons. The present world population, a mere 133 years later, is estimated at more than three billion. Expert estimates are that one-twentieth of all those who ever lived on the earth are here today. If the present rate of growth, now 50-60 million a year still continues in geometric progression, there will be six billion human beings in the world by the year 2,000. This is the appraisal of Dr. George Albert Smith, Jr., of the Harvard Business College. [Professor of Business Administration, Harvard University.]

He then asks the question: "What is the way of life to be for these people and for ourselves? Ask yourself this question often and earnestly and realize that the question will not go unanswered."

Whatever the population may be now or hereafter, truth will remain constant. To know the truth will make us free. Truth is eternal. We must seek truth at its source. Truth emanates from God. How applicable are the words of President John Taylor, spoken in 1861, a former head of the Church on earth:

"We believe that no man or set of men, of their own wisdom and by their own talents, are capable of governing the human family aright."

There is no unrest when you know where you are going spiritually.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6.)

Our message to the world, conveyed

by us and our missionaries, is to enlighten our fellow men who find themselves spiritually in the dark. There is absolutely nothing of such great worth to man as to know God. It has been said, "We know God when we know ourselves." To know ourselves we must know the answer to these simple questions—Who are we? Why are we here? And being here, what should we do?

The multitudes to whom the Savior spoke were all physically fed by the loaves and the fishes, but there was afterwards a spiritual segregation the multitude would make for themselves, illustrated by the following admonition of the Savior: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (*Ibid.*, 7:13-14.)

Do we go with the many or stand out spiritually as one of the few? To do the latter we must add to bodily sustenance the word of the Lord, for spiritual growth and development.

Thomas asked the Savior: ". . . Lord, we know not whether thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:5-6.)

Thomas was an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ to whom Christ had given his power, his priesthood, to preach the gospel taught by the Savior.

We know that we are called of God and have received his priesthood to preach the gospel and administer in its ordinances. Therefore the following scripture is of great meaning to us and important to the world. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (*Ibid.*, 13:20.)

Twelve thousand men and women, our beloved sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, leave home, family, friends, position, professions, business, and enter into the missionary work of the Church throughout the world at their own ex-

pense for a period of two or three years. They are compelled so to do by an absolute realization of the fact that they are called of our Heavenly Father to go into the world to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof, and that they have received the priesthood of God to qualify them therefore, just as the apostles of old. Members of many families have rendered this service for as many as six generations.

This process has gone on for 133 years; the number going on missions is increasing yearly. Their purpose is purely unselfish. They disseminate the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all mankind, to teach them to repent of their sins, to pray to God in faith, believing that their prayers will be answered in keeping with the promise found in the Epistle of James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.)

And finally the missionaries go to bear witness to the world that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that through the gift and power of the Holy Ghost we may all receive this same testimony for ourselves, independent of all else in the world. When received, this testimony is all consuming, all embracing. We know who we are, where we came from, and where through strict obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel we may go. Life's purpose becomes absolute and fixed. Our testimony and knowledge of God cannot be lost except through transgression. With transgression we also lose the Spirit of God and the Holy Ghost as our comforter.

As missionaries and elders holding the true priesthood of God, it is our duty, our prerogative, our privilege, to testify of our knowledge of God to preach the gospel and challenge our fellow men to forsake the ways of the world, the riches, the plaudits of men, and follow the gospel of our Savior and Redeemer to our own redemption.

No one need stumble along the way of life who desires to return ultimately into the presence of God in the kingdom of heaven. The Savior in his earthly mission made clear what is

expected of us if we do the will of our Father in heaven.

Let us consider for a moment the case of Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came to Christ by night: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

"Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? . . .

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:3-5.)

In fact, Jesus had already set the pattern by which all mankind should be guided:

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

"But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

"And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:13-17.)

Since that moment when Christ was baptized of John, the need for baptism by immersion for the remission of sins has never been rightfully debatable.

How wonderful was the experience of the apostles in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after the crucifixion and resurrection and ascension of Christ when they were inspired to declare: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent,

and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:36-38.)

This is the path that leadeth through the straight gate and along the narrow way to life eternal. Thus only can we truly worship God with all our might, mind, and strength.

It will make no difference to us whether there be three or six billion brothers and sisters on the earth, our own path to travel through life will be the same. Our responsibility to carry out the final charge Christ gave his apostles of old reiterated in our present dispensation is mandatory upon us today, namely: ". . . Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) This becomes relatively easier year after year as the Church grows and flourishes throughout the world. We have greater numbers to participate and all modern means of communication to help.

We have no cause to worry over the problems of the world no matter how complicated they become. We do need to worry about our appreciation of the laws of God given to control the conduct of man on the earth and our strict adherence thereto. How grateful we should be for the words of the Lord to Joseph Smith to inspire us today:

". . . a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. And not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, . . . shall be revealed . . . in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times." (D&C 128:18.)

We live in the most enlightened age of man's history, just as the prophets foretold. More is therefore expected of us than of any prior generation of man. "Where much is given, much is required." (See *ibid.*, 82:3.)

God help us to take full advantage of all the light and knowledge revealed to us, I pray humbly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.