

Father lives, that Joseph Smith was indeed the Prophet of this dispensation through whom the gospel, the divine pattern for living, was restored, and that President David O. McKay is presently the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us go from here with the determination and the moral courage to say as Job said, ". . . while my breath is in me, . . .

"My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

". . . till I die I will not remove . . . integrity from me." (Job 27:3-5.)

I pray for this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve. Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy will be our next speaker.

## ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

Brethren and sisters:

As I stand before you today, I seek an interest in your faith and prayers that, perhaps, I may say something that may be of help to some of us.

My life span covers nearly sixty-two percent of the lapsed time since the Church was re-established on the earth through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jun. For nearly forty percent of my life I have had opportunity to observe the forward movement of the Church as a member of the First Council of the Seventy. Quite naturally, I have been able to check, in a way, the responses of the priesthood members of the Church to the programs instituted, from time to time, for their encouragement and aid. In this I have reached a conclusion that what we, the bearers of the priesthood, most need is faith.

We declare in the Articles of Faith, "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." Also, "We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are; first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Articles 1 and 4.)

To me this means that we believe that God exists; that he is our Eternal Father and the Father of Jesus Christ; and we believe in the Holy Ghost. We believe also that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took upon himself mortal life,

accepted death, and rose from death to be the first evidence to man of the resurrection—"the first fruits of the resurrection." In so doing he overcame the effects of Adam's act which introduced mortality into the world. It was then possible, through death and the resurrection, for man to re-enter the presence of God in an exalted estate.

That man might be exalted, a plan of life was given him, and this we call the gospel.

Recurring to the fourth Article of Faith we learn that the first principle of this plan is that man should have faith in God and in our Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Faith is defined in one biblical passage as follows: ". . . faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:2.) Faith gives our yearnings substance and evidences to us the possibility of actual accomplishment. With this possibility before us, we undertake things new to us, gaining strength and courage, both physical and spiritual. In other words, faith in its broadest sense prompts every act of our lives. We increase faith in ourselves by the exercise of our faculties; we gain faith in our neighbors when our mutual interchanges accord with the gospel plan. We gain faith in the gospel plan—which means faith in God—by doing the various things required by it, and this means service. The only way I have discovered to serve God is to help his work along among his children. As we serve, we gain

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greater power of understanding and appreciation. Man is that he may have joy, and the greatest joy I have experienced has come through serving others.

Service, then, becomes a measuring stick for faith. If men serve faithfully and willingly, it is an indication of faith.

If we apply this measure to the service of the many men who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, we discover that too many of us fail to measure to a high standard of service. Shall we call it a lack of faith?

I like to believe, and this comes from my experience and observation, that many men fail in their interest in the work of the priesthood from lack of responsible opportunity and application. How can a man enjoy doing a thing in which he is not experienced and familiar?

The program of the Church is sufficiently broad to offer opportunity for most men to serve in some interesting capacity—this must be in a friendly atmosphere, for most people respond to friendship.

The purpose of the program awaiting initiation at the beginning of the new year is to surround these inactive brethren and sisters with an atmosphere of friendship and sincere interest, finding opportunity for attractive and friendly fellowship and service.

There is in the Church a veritable army of men who hold only the Aaronic Priesthood, hold no priesthood at all, or who, holding the Melchizedek Priesthood, fail to honor it by active service. Many of these men are burdened with, and struggle to overcome, habits which make them feel out of harmony with the program of the Church. When this may be the case, we should give them every possible aid in their struggle. There are few things more powerful than habits. When they are good, they become a great safeguard; when they are not, they reduce their capacity according to the seriousness of the affliction. Our problem is to aid with as little embarrassment as possible. Many men of my acquaintance have made this battle with themselves successfully and attained to greater happiness.

Changing from a life of inactivity in

the Church, or even opposition to the teachings and program of the Church, implies the need of repentance. It need not be offensive to suggest to a person that he change his ways to be more happy. That is what repentance means: a Godly sorrow for acts, improper or even just not wisely performed, and a change to a life filled with proper and correctly performed activities. This not only results in one's contentment and happiness but increases his interest in others and his service in their behalf. This change brings about a closer relationship with the Spirit of the Lord under whose influence one corrects his private life and his social relationships. Why should it be offensive to a person to be told that if he will, of his own volition, prove victor over his unfortunate habits, he will be happier and more useful?

This, brethren and sisters, is one of our major problems. Salvation is the objective of the Church. May God help us to realize this purpose.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

The Choir and congregation will now sing "How Firm a Foundation." Brother Jay E. Welch will lead us. Following this singing we shall hear from Sister Annette Richardson Dinwoodey. She will sing "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

The Tabernacle Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "How Firm A Foundation." Elder Jay E. Welch, Assistant Tabernacle Choir conductor, directing. Sister Annette Richardson Dinwoodey then sang a solo, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

**President David O. McKay:**

Thank you, Sister Dinwoodey. We shall now hear from Elder Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric, and he will be followed by Elder Mark E. Petersen.