

CHURCH OF THE AIR

Columbia Broadcasting System's *Church of the Air* was presented at 7:35 a.m. Sunday, October 6, 1963. The program was as follows:

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Richard P. Condie, furnished the music for this service. Richard L. Evans was the announcer.

Music: Organ and humming choir: "Sweet Is The Work."

Announcer: The Church of the Air is presented by CBS Radio so that representatives of many faiths may address a nation-wide congregation. Today's service, presented by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, comes to you from the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square, through the facilities of Radio Station KSL in Salt Lake City, Utah. Our speaker is Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church. Music is by the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir, directed by Richard P. Condie.

From a southern hymn tune, Virgil Thompson has arranged a setting for words suggested by the 23rd Psalm: "My

Shepherd will supply my need. Jehovah is his name. In pastures fresh he makes me feed beside the living stream."

(The Choir sang: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need."—Arr. Thompson.)

Announcer: And now from the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir we hear Charles Gounod's setting for a text paraphrased from Psalm 137—"Here by Babylon's Wave." "Though heathen hands have bound us, though afar from our land, the pains of death surround us; Sion! Thy mem'ry still in our hearts we are keeping, and still we turn to Thee, our eyes all sad with weeping."

(The Choir sang: "By Babylon's Wave."—Gounod.)

Announcer: We hear now on this Church of the Air service Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, who has had a distinguished career in Church and Civic Service, and who is a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, frequently referred to as the Mormon Church. Today's talk is titled: "Except the Lord Build the House. . . ."

ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

As I speak to you I am aware that I have come into your homes as your guest. I should like to talk with you about our homes. I am confident that you feel some concern, as do I, for the homes of America.

Recently I thumbed through the summary of the FBI Uniform Crime Report for 1962. In a few words and with a few charts it told a disturbing story—a six percent increase in serious crimes in the period of a single year, a nine percent increase in auto thefts, arrests of young people under 18 up nine percent, with female arrests increasing at a faster rate than male arrests. The question that came to mind immediately was how long can we go on with a nine percent increase in youth arrests each year?

One of our national magazines recently carried these words on the cover:

"Morality U.S.A. Do we need a new code to solve our crisis of immorality? Have our churches failed? Has money become God? Is sexual morality gone?" (*Look*, September 24, 1963) I read this provocative article. I have read others of similar tone written by men of government, industry, and education who have expressed themselves with deep concern over the moral crisis that evidently is sweeping across the land.

I am not one to believe that all was good in the long ago, and that all is bad today. I think this is the greatest age the world has known. But I am also confident that there is trouble in the land.

The article referred to above states: "We are witnessing the death of the old morality . . . The established moral guidelines have been yanked from our hands. We are left floundering in a

money-motivated, sex-obsessed, big city dominated society. We must figure out for ourselves how to apply the traditional moral principles to the problems of our times. Many find this burden too heavy." (*Idem*, p. 74.)

I should like to add that many of our youth will not and cannot figure out for themselves how to apply the traditional moral principles. They find this burden much too heavy. They must have help. They must have guidance. They must have example.

Private and public morality are rooted in the homes of the people. No nation is stronger than its homes. It is in the home that examples of virtue are best caught and lessons of virtue are best taught.

It was said of old, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Psalm 127:1.)

And so I welcome this opportunity to talk with you, and particularly you parents of the youth of America, on a theme on which I have expressed myself previously, and one which I feel is timely.

All agree that we need a new emphasis on honesty, character and integrity. All agree that only as we build again into the fiber of our lives the virtues which are the essence of true civilization will the pattern of our times change. The question that confronts us is, *Where shall we begin?*

I am satisfied that it must begin with recognition of God as our Eternal Father, of our relationship to Him as His children, with communication with Him in recognition of His sovereign position, and with daily supplication for His guidance in our affairs.

I submit that a return to the old pattern of prayer, family prayer in the homes of the people, is one of the simple medicines that would check the dread disease that is eroding the fiber of our character. We could not expect a miracle in a day, but in a generation we would have a miracle.

A generation or two ago family prayer in the homes of Christian people throughout the world was as much a part of the day's activity as were the meals. As that practice has diminished, our moral decay has ensued. I fear that

as the quality of our housing has improved, the spirit of our homes has deteriorated.

The discipline that is needed in our lives is the discipline that comes from within. Many are crying for more legislation and stricter law enforcement. I do not disparage these as expedients, but I fear they are only expedients. Virtue, integrity, honesty do not come of imposition from without. They are the fruits of good teaching and good example, and that teaching and that example are best followed when they are found in the home.

Paul of old declared to Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, . . . despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." (II Timothy 3:1-4.)

His words fit in a remarkable way the conditions described in the magazine article to which I have referred. Simple as it may sound, I think daily prayer in the homes of the nation would in a generation lift our heads above the flood that evidently is engulfing us.

I feel satisfied that there is no adequate substitute for the morning and evening practice of kneeling together before the Lord—father, mother, and children. The very practice of kneeling together with thankful hearts evaporates some of those qualities described by Paul: "Disobedient to parents, without natural affection."

There is something in the very posture of kneeling that contradicts some of the attitudes he noted: "Proud, heady, highminded."

The inclination to be unholy, as Paul described it, to be unthankful, is erased as together the family thank the Lord for life and peace and all they have. And as they thank the Lord for one another there is developed within the family a new appreciation, a new respect, a new affection one for another.

I know of nothing that will ease family tensions, that in a subtle way will bring about that respect for parents which leads to obedience, that will

effect a spirit of repentance which will largely erase the blight of broken homes, than will praying together, verbally confessing our weaknesses before the Lord, and invoking the blessings of the Lord upon the home and those who dwell there.

In remembering together before the Lord the poor, the needy, and the oppressed there is developed, unconsciously but realistically, a love for others above self, a respect for others, a desire to serve the needs of others.

One cannot ask God to help a neighbor in distress, without feeling motivated to do something oneself. What miracles would happen in the lives of the children of America if they would lay aside their selfishness and lose themselves in the service of others. The seed from which this sheltering and fruitful tree may grow is best planted and nurtured in the daily supplications of the family.

I know of no better way to inculcate love for country than for parents to pray before their children for the land in which we live, invoking the blessings of the Almighty upon it that it may be preserved in liberty and in peace. I know of no better way to build within the hearts of our children a much-needed respect for authority than remembering in the daily supplications of the family the President and the Congress and others who carry the burdens of government.

On the route I travel daily is a sign-board which reads: "A world at prayer is a world at peace." You have seen others like it. I believe it speaks a fundamental truth. I am satisfied that we shall not have peace unless and until we request it in the name of the Prince of Peace and then reform our lives to be worthy of it.

The hall from which I speak, the great Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, was constructed by a people who loved freedom, who worshipped God, and who prayed in their simple pioneer homes, as did most of the pioneers who laid the foundations of all that we in America today enjoy.

In 1872 Colonel Thomas L. Kane of Philadelphia visited Utah with his wife

and two sons. They traveled by wagon some three hundred miles to the southern part of the state, stopping each night in the homes of the people in the little frontier settlements along the way. Mrs. Kane wrote a series of letters to her father in Philadelphia. In one of them she said: "At every one of the places we stayed on this journey we had prayers immediately after the dinner-supper, and prayers again before breakfast. No one was excused . . . The Mormons kneel at once, while the head of the household, or an honored guest prays aloud . . . They spend very little time in ascriptions, but ask for what they need, and thank Him for what He has given . . . (They) take it for granted that God knows our familiar names and titles, and will ask a blessing on (a particular individual by name). I liked this when I became used to it."

It was so in the pioneer homes across the land. With the faith that came of these daily invocations these people grubbed the sagebrush, led the waters to the parched soil, made the desert blossom as the rose, governed their families in love, lived in peace one with another and with the world, and made their names immortal as they lost themselves in the service of God.

We cannot pray in our public schools, but we can pray in our homes, and in so doing we shall reweave into the character of our children the moral strength which will become the fiber of a better society. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." (Isaiah 55:6.)

This simple practice, a return to family worship, spreading across the land and over the earth, would in a generation do much to lift the blight that is destroying us. It would restore integrity, mutual respect, and a spirit of thankfulness in the hearts of the people.

We do not need a new moral standard in our modern society. The laws of God have not been abrogated. They were not given to one generation to be laid aside by another. Their disregard can result only in trouble, misery, and insecurity as witness the fruits of the erosion of morality among us. Their application is the way of life and peace and progress.

And so to you, who sit in your homes in this great land, established and pre-

served under the hand of the Almighty, I plead for a return to recognition of Him, and daily supplication to Him. The Master declared, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." (Matthew 7:7.)

I give you my testimony that you shall not go away unrewarded. The changes may not be readily apparent. They may be extremely subtle. But they will be real, for "God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.)

As we change ourselves and our children, developing within them a new respect, a spirit of gratitude, a becoming humility, we shall reform our society.

God bless us with the faith to call upon Him, at the altar of our homes, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

(The Choir sang: "Lovely Appear." Gounod.)

Announcer: With the music of Charles Gounod we have heard the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir sing these words taken from two Old Testament texts: "Lovely Appear over the mountains, the feet of them that preach, and bring good news of peace. Ye mountains, ye perpetual hills, bow ye down. Over the barren wastes shall flowers now have possession."

From the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir we hear a hymn of solid, fervent faith: "How firm a foundation, Ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent word! What more can He say than to you He hath said, You who unto Jesus, for refuge have fled?"

(The Choir sang: "How Firm a Foundation."—Anon.)

Announcer: In closing the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir recalls the words of John Henry Newman and the music of John B. Dykes: "Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom; Lead thou me on! The night is dark, and I am far from home; Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see The distant scene— one step enough for me."

(The Choir sang: "Lead, Kindly Light."—Dykes.)

Announcer: You have been attending CBS Radio's Church of the Air. Today's service came to you from the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square, through the facilities of Radio Station KSL in Salt Lake City, Utah. Our speaker was Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus of Latter-day Saints.

Music was by the Salt Lake Mormon Tabernacle Choir, directed by Richard P. Condie.

SALT LAKE MORMON

TABERNACLE CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

The following broadcast, written and announced by Richard L. Evans, and originating with Station KSL, Salt Lake City, Utah, was presented from 8:35 to 9:00 a.m. Sunday, October 6, 1963, through the courtesy of Columbia Broadcasting System's network, throughout the United States, parts of Canada, and through other facilities to several points overseas. The broadcast was as follows:

(The organ played, "As The Dew From Heaven Distilling," and on signal the Choir and organ broke into the Hymn, "Gently Raise The Sacred Strain," singing the words to the end of the second line, and humming to end of

verse for announcer's background.)

Announcer: Once more we welcome you within these walls with music and the spoken word from the Crossroads of the West.

The CBS Radio Network and its affiliated stations bring you at this hour another presentation from Temple Square in Salt Lake City, with Richard P. Condie conducting the Tabernacle Choir, Frank Asper, Tabernacle Organist, and the Spoken Word by Richard Evans.

With the music of Charles Gounod, the Tabernacle Choir sings first a sacred song of our Lord and Savior, "O Divine Redeemer."