

their works. By their fruits, the Lord has proved them. Life and service have taken on an altogether different meaning.

Development of Spiritual Qualities— The True Fruits

On a missionary program that I read the other night, words of President McKay were quoted that seem appropriate to what I am talking about. President McKay was quoted as having said: "Man's earthly existence is but a test as to whether he will concentrate his efforts, his mind, his soul, upon things that will contribute to the comfort and gratification of his physical nature, or whether he will make as his life's pursuit the acquisition of spiritual qualities."

In short, the President has said to us, the development of one's spiritual qualities will determine whether or not his has been a good tree, and that to be determined only by the quality of the fruit, or the spiritual gifts which come therefrom.

Mortality: Always Pain

A young mother went through the trying experience of having a little child who was killed in an accident, and she came and sought a blessing for comfort. She asked through her tears, "Must there always be pain in this life?" I thought a few minutes, and then said, "The Apostle Paul said of the Master, the Lord and Savior, 'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.' (Heb. 5:8.) I suppose that the answer is yes; there must always be pain in this life of travail and sorrow, and there is a purpose in it all."

"The road is rough, I said
Dear Lord, there are stones that hurt
me so.
And he said, Dear child, I understand,
I walked it long ago.

"But there is a cool green path, I said
Let me walk there for a time.
No child, He gently answered me,
The green road does not climb.

"My burden, I said, is far too great,
How can I bear it so?
My child, said he, I remember its
weight,
I carried my cross, you know.

"But, I said, I wish there were friends
with me
Who would make my way their own.
Ah, yes, he said, Gethsemane
Was hard to face alone.

"And so I climbed the stony path,
Content at last to know
That where my Master had not gone,
I would not need to go.

"And strangely then I found new friends
The burden grew less sore
As I remembered—long ago
He went that way before."

("In His Steps"—Leona B. Gates)

God help us to understand how we shall develop sometimes through heart-ache, sorrow, and tears those spiritual qualities except for which none of us can achieve to the place of kinship to him who suffered more than any of us may understand, and this I pray and bear you my solemn witness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy and president of the Southern Australian Mission will now speak to us.

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

To all who love the Lord and desire salvation in his kingdom, I pose this question: Was Joseph Smith called of God? In every age the great question

is whether the prophet of that day was sent of God. Those who faced the peril of a world-destroying flood were required to answer this question: Was

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Noah called of God? Those seeking escape from slavery in Egypt were forced to decide: Was Moses called of God? Those among whom our Lord himself ministered had to decide, at the peril of their own eternal salvation, whether Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, the very Son of God.

And so it is today. In an age when some people assume that Deity no longer speaks through prophets as he did anciently, the great question facing honest truth seekers is: Was Joseph Smith called of God? If Joseph Smith was called of God, the gospel plan restored through his instrumentality is the mind and will of the Lord and the only way whereby men can gain full salvation in the kingdom of heaven.

God has Spoken Again

Accordingly, we announce that God has spoken again in our day; that the heavens are no longer sealed; that revelation has commenced anew; that the promised era of restoration and gathering has begun. We teach and testify that God has restored the fulness of his everlasting gospel; that the Church of Jesus Christ—in all its glory, beauty, and perfection—has again been set up on earth; that the very kingdom of God is again here among men.

He has Conferred Power from "On High"

We speak with surety of angels coming to earth to confer priesthood, to bestow keys, to minister to men. We proclaim that an unchangeable God, in whose sight a soul is just as precious today as it ever was, has again poured out upon his Saints the same signs, the same gifts of the Spirit, the same miracles enjoyed of old. We are witnesses that the plan of salvation is revealed anew, and we are doing all in our power to teach its terms and conditions to our Father's children everywhere, so that they can gain peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come.

If all this is true—and we so testify (as did the prophets of old of the truth and divinity of their messages)—there neither is nor can be any message to compare with it. If the voice of God is heard again; if angels are descending

again from the courts on high; if the gift of the Holy Ghost is again poured out upon men—what is there in all the earth to compare in importance with it?

And it all began, for our day, with Joseph Smith and other faithful souls associated with him. In the spring of 1820 a spirit of religious revivalism swept the frontier areas of America. Contending professors of religion were crying, "Lo, here is Christ," or "Lo, there."

Finding himself "In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions," Joseph Smith was led by the Spirit to ask: "Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?" (Joseph Smith 2:10.)

He read 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.)

Guided by the Spirit, he did ask of God. And since the time had come for the opening of this final great gospel dispensation, and because he was the one chosen from eternity to commence the work, he received a transcendent heavenly manifestation.

The First Vision

"... I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun," he says, "which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

"... When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith 2:16-17.)

Then from the lips of the Resurrected Lord, the young Prophet received the command to join none of the sects of the day, and also the promise that if he remained true and faithful he would be the instrument in the Lord's hands to restore again to earth the fulness of the everlasting gospel.

In due course, amid testings and trials, other revelations came. The

Book of Mormon was revealed, translated, and published as a new witness of Christ and his gospel—an inspired record of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of America. Angels restored the priesthood and keys so essential to the work of the Lord on earth. The doctrines of salvation, as preserved in the Bible, were confirmed and clarified by modern revelation. New light and knowledge, new revelation, to meet all the challenges of a modern world, were added to the canon of scripture.

The Church Organized

On April 6, 1830, by revelation and commandment, the Church of Jesus Christ, the same organization set up and perfected by Jesus and his Apostles of old, was again established among men. In it the Lord placed Apostles and prophets, revelation and visions, signs and miracles, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the true doctrines of salvation—indeed, all that was enjoyed by those of old who wrought righteousness, obtained promises, and gained eternal life.

To this newly set-up kingdom of our Lord, the command came to carry the restored message of salvation to all men. With this commission came the revealed promise that the gospel would roll forth, as the stone cut from the mountain without hands, until it filled the whole earth. The present Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with its millions of members and tens of thousands of missionaries, is continuing the work which will some day see the fulfillment of this divine promise.

Now, what of all these things? Are they true or false? In the very nature of things there is no middle ground. Our position is not like that of other organizations or churches. We are a peculiar people.

Covenants and Commandments

We say God has spoken from heaven giving us covenants and commandments.

We say angels have come from the presence of the Lord giving the same priesthood possessed by prophets of old.

We say Joseph Smith was called of God to commence the promised restitu-

tion of all things and the latter-day gathering of Israel.

We say there are on earth today Apostles and prophets in the same literal sense in which such men graced this globe in generations gone.

We say The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on earth and that in and through it men may gain the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

Now, these things are either true or false. Either God has spoken again or the silence of centuries remains unbroken. Either angels have come or they have not. Either the gospel has been restored or the diverse and variant forms of a waning Christianity remain the best hope of the world. Either Joseph Smith was called of God or he was not.

If Joseph Smith was a Prophet, our professions are true. From that spring day in 1820 to the present moment, Joseph Smith's name has increasingly been the center of religious inquiry. Hosts of men have sought to learn about his prophetic calling.

Once when he was in dire and perilous circumstances the voice of God comforted him with this assurance: "The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name, and fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee;

"While the pure in heart, and the wise, and the noble, and the virtuous, shall seek counsel, and authority, and blessings constantly from under thy hand." (D&C 122:1-2.)

His Atoning Sacrifice

Certainly salvation centers in and comes because of Christ and his atoning sacrifice. He is the Lord God Omnipotent, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Savior of the World. But Christ is known by and revealed through his prophets. Joseph Smith was the revealer of Christ and his gospel to the world for this age. When the ends of the earth inquire after the name of Joseph Smith, it is because they seek the knowledge of Christ and of salvation that was revealed through him. Indeed, the revealed decree of Christ to Joseph Smith is: ". . . this generation

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shall have my word through you." (*Ibid.*, 5:10.)

Further: To the newly established Church in this dispensation the Lord said, speaking of Joseph Smith: ". . . thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

"For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith." (*Ibid.*, 21:4-5.)

The Divine Mission of Joseph Smith

Thus when we bear record of the divine mission of Joseph Smith, we are also certifying to the divine Sonship of him whose servant the Prophet was. And when men of sobriety and sense testify, in all humility and with deep conviction, that they know by personal revelation that Joseph Smith was a Prophet, an obligation rests upon all who hear to investigate and learn for themselves whether that testimony is true.

When Philip learned for himself that Jesus was the promised Messiah, he sought out Nathanael and bore this testimony: "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, . . ." Nathanael was skeptical. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" he asked.

"Philip saith unto him, Come and see."

Nathanael came, investigated, learned for himself, and, speaking directly to Jesus, bore this testimony: ". . . thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." (See John 1:41-51.)

Restitution of All Things

Similarly, we say to all men everywhere: "We have found the mighty prophet of the latter days, the one called of God to bring to pass the promised restitution of all things spoken by the mouths of all his holy prophets since the world began." (See Acts 3:19-21.)

We know some will be skeptical. They will say: "Can it be that there

are actually prophets of God on earth again? Is it possible that God gives revelation today?" To which we say: "Come and see. Inquire. Investigate. Learn for yourself. Ask God. Remember the promise: '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.)

In issuing this invitation we know full well that "the pure in heart, and the wise, and the noble, and the virtuous," among all nations will gain personal testimonies of the divinity of this great latter-day work. They will know as we know that Joseph Smith was called of God, for the Spirit will bear record to them, as it has to us, and as it did to the modern Apostle who, in announcing for the Church the martyrdom of the Prophet, wrote these words:

"Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it." (D&C 135:3.)

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy has just addressed us.

The Chorus and congregation will now join in singing, "Come, O Thou King of Kings," conducted by Jay E. Welch, with Roy M. Darley at the organ.

After the singing Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

The Selected Youth Choir and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Come, O Thou King of Kings."

President Hugh B. Brown:

Elder William J. Critchlow, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve.