

Sunday, April 5

Second Day

that by direct revelation and the power of God we have the Book of Mormon which contains the gospel in its fulness; that the heavens are as open today as they were in the days of Moses, Abraham, Peter, James, and John, and Paul; God still answers the prayers of the righteous and still reveals his mind and will through his ordained prophets; that David O. McKay is a prophet of God through whom the Lord speaks to his people today.

From the very time that the young boy Joseph at the age of fourteen, went into the grove to ask God which church he should join until today, he and those who have followed him as presidents of this Church have been led by revelation in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

May we all hold fast to the iron rod, which is the word of God, and listen to the prophet's voice and serve God and keep his commandments that he may continue to lead us in the paths of righteousness to immortality and eternal

life, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to President Nathan Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency of the Church.

The men of the Tabernacle Choir will now favor us with "I Need Thee Every Hour." After the singing Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will speak to us.

The Choir sang the hymn, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

President David O. McKay:

There are things in every human mind that cannot be expressed in words, but they can be in music, and we have had that message this morning sung in the music by the Choir.

Brother Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us.

ELDER FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brothers and sisters, I am happy to be with you this Sabbath morning in this great conference, and I pray that I may be guided by the Spirit of the Lord in speaking to you.

I have been greatly inspired by the presence and words of our beloved prophet David O. McKay and of President N. Eldon Tanner. I bring you the love and greetings of the missionaries and of the Saints of the nine eastern American missions, and I am pleased to report to you that there is great growth and development in the kingdom in that part of our Lord's vineyard.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we call one another Brother and Sister because we recognize that all mankind are sons and daughters of our Father in heaven, therefore, we are all brothers and sisters.

This spirit of brotherhood is greatly needed in the world today. We are living in a period when one crisis follows another. Faith in mankind is being disturbed and destroyed, and

men's hearts are troubled and seem to be failing them. Yet there is a disposition even in Christian countries to rule out of life the mission of Jesus Christ.

The Godhead

The first statement in the declaration of belief of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father and in His son Jesus Christ and in the Holy Ghost." This belief in God is the life-giving element of the Church. Our conception of God is personal. God in this dispensation has revealed himself to mankind as he has in former dispensations. Through faith and prayer Joseph Smith as a young man gained the great blessing of beholding God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.

In his own words, Joseph Smith said, ". . . 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 2:17.)

I bear witness that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, our Savior and Redeemer. Also that Joseph Smith, in fulfillment of prophecy, was a great prophet of God, an instrument in his hands to restore the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness as well as the true knowledge of God and to restore the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days. The Church has been restored here on the earth with the power to act in the name of God and has been led by prophets since its restoration. A great prophet, David O. McKay, now leads and directs through revelation from God.

The Atonement

Through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. The Savior said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:1, 6.) Jesus taught that all the law and the prophets rested upon the principle of loving God with all of our heart, might, mind, and strength and our neighbors as ourselves.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the plan of life that will restore peace to the world—remove inner tensions and troubles and bring happiness and contentment—the greatest philosophy of life ever given to man. It is founded upon the basic principles of love of God and man and showing this love in service to our fellow men. All mankind must shape their lives upon the simple principles he taught and lived to comprehend him in his power and majesty.

In the Service of God

King Benjamin, a great prophet, stated: "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God." (Mosiah 2:17.)

Jesus said, "... seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; ..." (Matt. 6:33.)

"... the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

"... the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

"Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." (*Ibid.*, 13:44-46.)

President Lorenzo Snow, one of the prophets of this dispensation, in speaking to the Saints in 1898 had this to say: "We have found the treasure in the field, we have found the Pearl of Great Price—and now we have got to give all that we have for it—at one time or another. The Lord has said that he will prove us even unto death to see whether we will stand by the covenant we have made with him."

A distinguishing feature of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the opportunity for every member to serve in some capacity. Recently while traveling on a plane in the East I asked the man sitting next to me what he knew about the Church. He replied that he had lived in Salt Lake City for a few months some years ago, and became acquainted with several members of the Church. The thing that impressed him most was that every member was given a chance to serve by working in the Church. We are told plainly and unequivocally that our greatest opportunity and responsibility here is building the kingdom of God, Christ's Church on earth. I know this to be true.

In 1894 Elder Francis M. Lyman, one of the leaders of the Church, gave this counsel: "It will be profitable to all Latter-day Saints to make this Church first in their hearts and affections. Why? Because the Lord has told us to seek first the kingdom of God. We have sought the kingdom and have found it—and now that should have our attention before farming, before merchandising, and before literary pursuits and the like.

The Primary Object

"The welfare of the Church of Christ

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in the earth and the spreading abroad of the gospel should be our primary object.

"But is this the case with us? If it is not, then we have need of reformation. If the Church of Christ and the principles of righteousness are not foremost in our hearts, then I say all Israel so far as they lack, have need of reformation.

"If we have set our hearts upon property, whether it be little or much (for I presume a man could worship a little property as well as a great deal), then we are idolators, and God has forbidden us to be idolators. He has commanded us not to bow down to worship anything on earth." This counsel is as important and applicable today as it was when it was given seventy years ago, perhaps more so.

The Savior said, ". . . unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: . . ." (Luke 12:48.)

As I travel throughout the Church I am told by the leaders that the most pressing need today is "Greater dedication on the part of everyone in building the kingdom." In the parables referred to, the price of possession of the hidden treasure and of the pearl of great price is one's all—complete dedication. We might ask, "How does the Lord interpret 'giving our all' or 'complete dedication,' and how will he prove us even unto death as President Snow stated?"

Giving our all or complete dedication means—putting the Church first in our lives. It means to accept every opportunity to serve. As you accept each call, recognize the tremendous opportunity even though the assignment does not appear to be too important, or you may feel your inadequacy.

I heard of a young man who in presenting a diamond to his fiancée remarked, "it isn't very large," whereupon she replied, "it's as big as we make it." So it is with every call to serve that we accept—it's as big as we make it.

Opportunities Many and Varied

Opportunities to serve in building the kingdom are varied and many. Some require giving of our time, others require giving of our talents, others require giving of our means. When we accept any assignment to serve "giving

our all" means giving all of the time, talents, and means necessary to accomplish the righteous objective. In being asked to give of our time, few are asked to lay down their lives in building the kingdom, but if this were to be required, we should be willing to do so. In many respects it is better to live for the Church than to die for it. Living for the Church can mean accepting a call as a teacher, a quorum or auxiliary leader, a bishop, a stake officer, a temple or welfare worker, a home teacher, a missionary, or in performing any service for our fellow men.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has no paid ministry. As an example: The bishops of the wards throughout the Church are laymen and arrange their time and affairs so that they can provide and care for their families and still shepherd the flocks over which they are placed. This type of service is truly giving one's all.

"Teach All Nations"

Jesus told his disciples in the Meridian of Time that they should, "Go . . . and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: . . ." (Matt. 28:19-20.)

The Savior has given us this same charge in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith and the prophets that have followed him. The Church of Jesus Christ has always been a missionary Church. At the present time there are approximately 16,000 full time and stake missionaries working throughout the world. Every member of the Church has been charged with the responsibility of giving the gospel message to his friends and neighbors.

There is no greater evidence of giving your all than that shown by dedicated missionaries. We ask that you give heed to their message as you have an opportunity to hear it. The message is—that the heavens have been opened and the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness has been restored. It is indeed a message of glad tidings, ". . . the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . ." (Rom. 1:16.)

Investment of Talents in Service

Some opportunities to serve require the giving of our talents as well as of our time. The Lord has told us, "... with some I am not well pleased, for they will not open their mouths, but they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. . . .

"... Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent that it may not be known." (D&C 60:2, 13.)

Giving our all through the use of our talents is exemplified beautifully by the members of the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir. These dedicated people spend untold hours rehearsing and preparing for and presenting their regular Sunday morning program and their many special appearances throughout the world. The choir is the means of opening the hearts and doors of millions of people to the gospel message. Their only remuneration comes from the joy they receive in serving the Lord.

Giving our all as applied to our means involves contributing financially to the growth and development of the kingdom. He who pays an honest tithe and makes his other offerings as required is giving his all as far as these matters are concerned. The widow's mite is as acceptable as the rich man's abundance.

Taking care of the poor and needy through welfare projects and in many other ways requires the giving of our means, and each one of these instances is impressive evidence of one's dedication. Building the kingdom also requires the building of chapels, temples, schools, hospitals, and other church buildings in order to take care of the spiritual and physical needs of God's children.

Many throughout the world have left their homes, much the same as the missionaries, to serve in the vast building program of the Church, furnishing much of the supervision and labor needed. Substantial financial contributions as well as time are required to carry on the worldwide building operation. When these buildings are dedicated to the Lord, they are entirely free from debt.

Sacrifice Brings Blessings

Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven, and in this respect financial sacrifice means opportunities for great and varied blessings. Certainly the sacrifices entailed in contributing to the building program of the Church, both of time and means, are outstanding examples of giving one's all.

The Apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthian Saints emphasized the importance of our attitude in giving when he said:

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:6-7.)

Jesus in teaching his disciples counseled, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

Building the Kingdom

The message of Christianity is to love and to serve, and we truly show our love by our good works. To attain real greatness, the Savior tells us, one must be the servant of all.

The question is frequently asked, are people as dedicated today in building the kingdom as they were in former times. I feel that generally they are. Giving our all today may in some respects be different from heretofore, but I see evidences every day where men, women, and children are showing their love of God and their fellow men by their complete dedication. They are gladly giving their all in time, talents, and means. I commend them for it. I counsel all others to put the Church first in their lives and reap the peace, happiness, and contentment that come from giving their all through complete dedication.

My brothers and sisters, we are en-

gaged in the Lord's work. God lives, and Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. I know this to be true. The heavens have been opened, and prophets have been raised up. Joseph Smith was indeed a great prophet raised up to perform a mighty work in establishing God's kingdom in this dispensation. And we have a great prophet at the head of the Church today, our beloved President David O. McKay. All mankind would do well to heed his counsel and advice. I bear this testimony to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He who has just addressed us is Elder Franklin D. Richards, grandson of Brother Williard Richards who was with the Prophet during the Prophet's last days.

A number of television and radio stations have just joined us. We welcome all those who have tuned in for this Conference session. We shall now hear from Elder Robert L. Simpson of the Presiding Bishopric. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton.

BISHOP ROBERT L. SIMPSON

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

I am a father. I share this popular title with millions. I would like to do some thinking with all of the fathers within range of my voice this morning, and we sincerely invite the rest of the family to listen in. Dads, do you realize that we have had one of the truly great compliments of the ages bestowed upon us? It has been wisely stated that "to be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved."

As choice young spirits have been sent into our charge, the sacred trust that I refer to has been bestowed by Heavenly Father. I would like to have all fathers join me this morning as we contemplate the obligations associated with this great blessing of fatherhood.

Obligations and Blessings

Who among us fathers would not thrill at the prospects of our son recording of us as a boy prophet recorded more than 2500 years ago: "... having been born of goodly parents" (1 Nephi 1:1), or perhaps this recording from the pen of our modern-day Prophet, Joseph Smith, Jun., as he said, "... I love my father and his memory; and the memory of his noble deeds rests with ponderous weight upon my mind, and many of his kind and parental words to me are written on the tablet of my heart. . . .

"Words and language are inadequate to express the gratitude that I owe to God for having given me so honorable a parentage." (DHC 5, see pp. 125-126.)

Such an expression of gratitude from

one of our sons could hardly be expected, much less appreciated, without some real effort on our part in order to merit it.

So how about it, dads? Let's put our heads together for just a few minutes and determine some ways to improve our contribution to the partnership we have with God the Eternal Father in guiding the destiny of human souls, in this case, our sons.

Love, the Prime Ingredient

Let us place first things first and mention love as the prime ingredient. I rather think that Heavenly Father would like the idea of love heading our list, for his Only Begotten, the Savior of the world, had unlimited capacity for love. This single trait of love was most typical of his brief mortal ministry.

In this day the Lord has revealed his will to us concerning our approach to one another, and I cannot think of a single reason why it should not apply especially to the father-son relationship. He speaks of using our power and influence, "... only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—" (D&C 121:41-42.)

In acknowledging God's patience with the children of Israel, Nehemiah described God as "... ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger,