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dencies, high councilmen, bishoprics, temple presidents, general auxiliary officers, patriarchs, and others who are here with us today. We also extend a cordial welcome and express satisfaction and pleasure in the attendance of the special guests and prominent men in the nation and the state.

The music for this session will be rendered by the Tabernacle Choir, with Richard P. Condie and Jay E. Welch conducting. Alexander Schreiner is at the organ.

We shall begin these services by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "O Divine Redeemer" conducted by Jay E. Welch, Assistant Director. The invocation will be offered by Elder Harry Haldeman, president of the Santa Barbara Stake.

The opening number by the Choir was "O Divine Redeemer," conducted by Jay E. Welch, Assistant Director of the Tabernacle Choir.

Elder Harry J. Haldeman, President

of the Santa Barbara Stake offered the invocation.

**President N. Eldon Tanner:**

The Tabernacle Choir will now favor us with "The King of Glory," with Sister Jessie Evans Smith as soloist, conducted by Richard P. Condie.

After the singing, President Hugh B. Brown, first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, will address us.

The Choir, with Jessie Evans Smith, soloist, sang "The King Of Glory," Richard P. Condie conducting.

**President N. Eldon Tanner:**

President Hugh B. Brown, first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, will be our first speaker this afternoon, and he will be followed by Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve.

## PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

Humbly I seek divine guidance.

The Savior said: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

### Revival of Religion

The remarks yesterday of President Mark E. Petersen and today of President Tanner and others, calling our attention to conditions as they exist in the world, were very challenging.

Leaders in both scientific and religious fields are calling for new light. From a sermon which was recently preached in England by an eminent professor of theology and published to the world by Dean Inge, we read:

"How great is the need in Britain today for a man to arise among us to lead a mighty crusade for the revival of our religion. For years all Christendom has prayed that that revival might be near, and according as the need is great, so great is the opportunity. From end to end of the land, north and south and west and east, the feeling is arising

that something more is required today than the advice, however good, of our statesmen, and the ability, however great, of our businessmen, that there are problems to be solved more urgent and more fundamental than those of economics and elections."

And then he adds: "*The organized churches offer no solution to these problems. . . . Men and women look for an interpreter of their emotions, for someone who will give expression to their spiritual convictions and beliefs, submerged too long in a materialistic age. The seed has been sown. It has sprung up under showers and sunshine. The grain is swollen inside the husk. Now the field lies golden and ready for the harvest. Where is the man who will go in and reap?*"

In the midst of national and international unrest, confusion, and stress, the questions of theology have acquired a new importance and urgency. Throughout the Judaeo-Christian world, in fact the entire world, there is a soul-stirring search for new meanings in religion

upon which men may ground their lives and establish their personal and social values.

In recent months an intense theological debate has been waged around a volume entitled *Honest to God*, in which Dr. Robinson, the Bishop of Woolwich of the Anglican Church, asks the question whether it is possible for modern men to accept traditional Christian faith, to believe in the established conception of God, and to accept Christ as their Savior. He questions whether Christianity carries with it the trappings of an ancient world and culture, and whether it can be made relevant to the thought and character of modern scientific man, living in a rapidly shrinking technological world.

The bishop says, "Our image of God must go," and the *Church Times* comments: "It is not every day that a bishop goes on public record as apparently denying almost every Christian doctrine of the Church in which he holds office." (*The Honest to God Debate*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963, p. 7.)

Dr. Alasdair MacIntyre of the University College of Oxford says, "Dr. Robinson's book needs not only to be understood as a symptom of our condition, but to be sympathized with as a desperate attempt that cannot succeed," (*Ibid.*, p. 227) and he adds, somewhat cynically, "The creed of the English is there is no God and it is wise to pray to him from time to time." (*Ibid.*, 228.) This book of which I speak is not just the voice of an individual, but it "testifies to the existence of a whole group of theologies which have retained a theistic vocabulary but acquired an atheistic substance" (*Ibid.*, 227) and one wonders whether they can continue to co-exist.

The Archbishop of Canterbury says, "... if Dr. Robinson's argument is right, the traditional views of God are not outmoded, they are simply false." (*Ibid.*, 217.)

#### A New Birth in Our Time

The argument that has ensued around these and other questions has engaged the leading minds in both Europe and America recently, and they indicate a

sense of loss, frustration, and failure that are so much a part of modern life. The hope is expressed that there will be a new birth in our time that will restore something of the meaning and value of human existence.

We have all felt the impact of war and economic depression, the dehumanizing influence of industrialization, the overcrowding of our cities, the ever-present and ominous threat of nuclear war with its total destruction, and the myriad social forces that complicate our lives and affect our values. We share the conscience of a world in which mass murder has been real and in which millions go to bed hungry every night in the presence of abundance.

#### Absolute Confidence in the Gospel

While we look forward hopefully to the help we may get from science and technology in our attempts to solve our problems, we rely with absolute confidence upon the theology and religion of the Church of Jesus Christ for the inspiration and faith to sustain us in this endeavor, and to this end our spiritual strength is grounded firmly on the foundation of revealed religion and the biblical conviction of the reality of the Living God.

Unlike those whose religious faith is uneasy and precarious in the modern world of expanding scientific knowledge, we are at home with the most advanced truths discovered by scientists and with all competent philosophic thought—with truth wherever found—because our religion enjoins in us a love of knowledge and education, encourages us to seek understanding through the broadening of our vision and the deepening of our insight. This is an eternal quest.

#### Newly Revealed Truth Accepted

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts newly revealed truth, whether it comes through direct revelation or from study and research. We deny the common conception of reality that distinguishes radically between the natural and the supernatural, between the temporal and the eternal, between the sacred and the secular. For us, there is no order of reality that is utterly different in character from the world of

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which we are a part, that is separated from us by an impassable gulf. We do not separate our daily mundane tasks and interests from the meaning and substance of religion. We recognize the spiritual in all phases and aspects of living and realize that this life is an important part of eternal life. We aspire to the best of which we are intrinsically capable and will think our thoughts, fashion our ideals, and pursue every task firm in the faith that in a very real sense we are living in the presence of God here and now.

We accept the testimony of the sacred scriptures that the purposes of God are enacted in human history, that he is primarily interested in man's condition and welfare though he will never trammel our free agency. His work and his glory is, as the prophets have said, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

#### Positive Doctrine of Man

Our doctrine of man is positive and life affirming. We declare unequivocally that by his very nature every man has the freedom to do good as well as evil, that God has endowed him with a free moral will and given him the power to discern good from evil, right from wrong, and to choose the good and the right. We refuse to believe, with some churches of Christendom, that the biblical account of the fall of man records the corruption of human nature or to accept the doctrine of original sin. We do not believe that man is incapable of doing the will of God or is unable to merit the rewards of Divine approval; that he is therefore totally estranged from God and that whatever salvation comes to him must come as a free and undeserved gift. We never tire of proclaiming the inspiring truth of the gospel that man is that he might have joy. For us the so-called fall of man placed the human spirit in a world of experience and adventure where evils are real but can be overcome, where free moral decision is a constant requirement, and where choices, freely made, determine the quality of life and the eventual condition of the soul.

This does not mean that we are

oblivious to the evils of the world, the sins of men, and the immeasurable suffering that is daily endured by millions. Ours is not a superficial faith that sees only the bright side of life and denies the fact of human tragedy. Our conscience is wounded by the massive evils that men have perpetrated in our own time, by sins that are unspeakable in the depth of their horror. But we have the positive faith that places the responsibility of these sins squarely upon the individuals and societies who commit them.

#### Man, A Child of God, Not Alone

In our theology, God did not bring the world into being from nothing. He organized it from existing materials. We accept the scriptural statement that God created man in his own image. ". . . in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:27.) He is engaged in a constant struggle with the evils of the world, to overcome whatever brings pain and suffering, frustration and failure, and he asks that we co-operate with him by keeping his commandments, by obeying the laws upon which all blessings are predicated. This is the meaning of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, that man as a child of God is not alone in the world, for God shares our suffering and delights in our joys. In this community with him we can overcome the world, achieving the abundant life here, and immortality and eternal life hereafter.

We shall overcome any seeming contradictions between science and religion if and as we learn to adhere to the teachings of the restored Church, which have always been dedicated to the search for knowledge and intelligence, which is the glory of God.

#### Christianity Relevant to the Modern World

To the question raised by the Bishop of Woolwich, "Is Christianity relevant to the modern world?" we find positive and affirmative answers in the unequivocal declarations of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel does not belong to an antiquated world that has passed away but is a real and power-

ful force in our world here and now. It invests our individual lives with meaning and purpose and will yet transform the course of human history.

When we speak of the unity of the Godhead, we refer to the attributes, powers, and purposes of its members. Jesus testified to the unity existing between himself and his Father on many occasions as is recorded in the Holy Bible and other revealed documents. He referred to this unity in his memorable prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, where he prayed that he and his followers might be one even as he and his Father are one. (John 17:11.)

#### Evidence of Intelligence

It will become clear to any unbiased reader of the scriptures that the Father is a personal being, possessing a definite form with bodily parts and spiritual passions. The Son, who was in the express image of the Father, is a separate identity by whom the worlds were made and without whom was not anything made that was made. (See John 1:3.) He was, in fact, a revelation of God.

We see everywhere in nature evidence of cause and effect, of means adapted to an end, which indicate a given purpose. This is evidence of intelligence, and intelligence is an attribute of mind. We must therefore conclude that it was an intelligent mind that built the stupendous universe of God.

#### Convincing Knowledge of God

Human reason may not of itself lead its possessor to convincing knowledge of God, yet if properly exercised will confirm his inherited instinct toward his maker. Truly "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Psalm 14:1.)

We know him to be a living being with every essential property and attribute of personality—that he thinks, wills, feels that he is a moral being who demands righteousness and justice—but that in his love he is compassionate, merciful, and longsuffering.

For us God is not an abstraction, he is not just an idea, a metaphysical principle, an impersonal force or power. He is not identical with the totality of

the world, with the sum of all reality. He is not an "absolute" that in some way embraces the whole of reality in his being. Like us, he exists in a world of space and time. Like us, he has ends to be achieved, and he fashions a cosmic plan for realizing them. He is a concrete, living person, and though in our finite state we cannot fully comprehend him, we know that we are akin to him, for he is revealed to us in the divine personality of his Son Jesus Christ.

There has been a marked change in the teachings of many of the churches concerning God, and many thinking men and scholars now believe him to be a personal being and not an abstract essence. This is shown in the book *A Century's Change in Religion*, wherein the author, after telling the beliefs of the churches in America at the beginning of the nineteenth century, says, "It is within the last fifty years that this mighty change or extension of belief has come about. The new thought is the kingdom of God on earth in the Christian society. The church is now dominated by this idea. The gospel of the kingdom on earth is the latest, the newest, the oldest, and the truest gospel."

He further adds, "There has been a change in our thought of God from the conception of sovereignty to this conception of Fatherhood. The center of doctrine has shifted from sovereignty to Fatherhood.

"God is a person; He is intelligence, and that is purpose, plan; He is will, and that is realizing purpose; He is love, that is, He is person related to person. Whatever more than personality, as we know it, He may be, He is that in perfect degree which our best is in imperfect degree." (Harris, George, *A Century's Change in Religion*, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1914, p. 251.)

#### He Is Real and Personal

For ourselves, we reaffirm our conviction that God is real and personal, that Jesus the Christ is his Only Begotten Son. We rejoice to proclaim to the world that he is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. Our answer, then, to the Bishop of Woolwich is that God is real and personal, and

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we are not concerned as he seems to be as to whether he is "up there" or "out there" or whether this is a three-storied universe. We know that he lives, that he can and does appear to men. In fact, the whole structure of Mormonism is based on revelation. The Father and the Son were revealed to a young man in the state of New York in 1820, and since that time many glorious revelations have come to reassure us in our faith that he lives. He declared it to be his work and his glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. This is our answer, then, to the question whether it is possible for modern men to accept the true Christian faith. It was established by Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time and restored by him in the Fulness of

Times. Hence, we do not share the fear, uncertainty, and confusion mentioned by Dean Inge or the Bishop of Woolwich. We call attention to the biblical image of God in which he is identified as personal, eternal, unchangeable, and everlasting, to which we humbly bear witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President N. Eldon Tanner:

He to whom we have just listened is President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency. Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

### ELDER BOYD K. PACKER

#### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

There has lingered in my mind since yesterday morning a sentence from the inspired voice of President David O. McKay. "Pure hearts," he said, "in a pure home are always within whispering distance of heaven." This touched my heart. From it, and from the whispered prayer of a little youngster this morning, I took assurance and found an unexpected preface for the subject, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, . . ." (Mark 10:14.)

An associate of mine had a little girl undergo surgery. They arranged for one of the parents to stay with the little youngster during the period of recuperation—for a hospital can be a strange and a frightening place for a little youngster who is injured or ill.

Coincidentally she shared a room at the hospital with another little girl just the same age who had also undergone surgery. During the long, painful hours following the operation, this little girl struggled almost convulsively against the pain, pleading incessantly for her parents. "Mister," she would beg, "will you please go find my mommy?" My friend, and in turn his wife, found themselves more at the bed of this little girl than of their own child, for she seemed to need them more.

Finally in the evening hours her parents appeared. They hurriedly visited for a few minutes in a casual way and then nervously observed that they had a social engagement and left the little youngster to face her agony alone.

How well they had taught the lesson—how enduringly they had impressed upon the pliable little mind that she was an intrusion into their lives. How unfortunately typical they are of many parents who unwittingly, unconsciously, merely endure their children.

It has been my privilege in the past to speak to young people and to fathers. Today I address my remarks to mothers of little children and recall for their contemplation these words from the Gospel of St. Mark:

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (*Ibid.*, 10:13-14.)

#### A Sacred Influence

While the responsibility to guide little children belongs to both parents,