

is Elder Paul H. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy. Elder Thomas S.

Monson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker, please.

ELDER THOMAS S. MONSON
Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, the responsibility of standing before you humbles me, and I sincerely seek an interest in your prayers that I might have the help of the Lord.

This morning as Sister Monson and I drove down here to this beautiful Tabernacle, I heard a familiar sound. I heard a school bell ring, and I saw scores of boys and girls of every age hurry this way and scurry that way to the classrooms of learning. They were in search of truth. This is the season of the year, too, when the colleges and universities throughout the land open wide their doors that eager students might continue this search for truth. Their teachers and scientists of all fields pursue their constant labor of studying, experimenting—ever continuing this same search.

Yearning for Truth

Is the search for truth really this important? Is it so vital? Must it span the ages of time, encompass every field of endeavor, and penetrate every human heart? President David O. McKay has said, "Fortunately, there is a natural feeling which urges men and women toward truth. It is a responsibility placed upon mankind."

Even the law of the land jealously safeguards the principle of truth. In our courts of law, before a witness takes the stand to testify, he is placed under solemn oath ". . . the testimony you are about to give . . . is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, . . ."

The poet captured the real significance of the search for truth when he wrote these immortal lines:

" . . . say, what is truth?
'Tis the brightest prize
To which mortals or Gods can aspire;
Go search in the depths where it glittering lies
Or ascend in pursuit to the loftiest skies.
'Tis an aim for the noblest desire.

"Then say, what is truth?
'Tis the last and the first,
For the limits of time it steps o'er.
Though the heavens depart and the earth's fountains burst,
Truth, the sum of existence, will weather the worst,
Eternal, unchanged, evermore."
(John Jaques, *Hymns*, p. 143.)

Truth Defined

The Prophet Joseph Smith received the definition of truth in a revelation from the Lord at Kirtland, Ohio, May 6, 1833. ". . . truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come. . . ." (D&C 93:24.)

Preceding almost every declaration of eternal truth has been a universal question; for instance, what man has not asked himself as did Job of old, "If a man die, shall he live again? . . ." (Job 14:14.) And what man has not found comfort in the answer which the angel gave to Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, when they approached the tomb to care for the body of the Master. He said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" "He is not here, but is risen: . . ." (Luke 24:5-6.)

**"If Any Lack Wisdom,
Let Him Ask of God"**

Thousands of honest, searching souls continue to be confronted by that penetrating question which coursed through the mind of Joseph Smith as he surveyed the declarations made by the churches of his community concerning who was right and who was wrong. Joseph said: "In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions, I often said to myself: . . . Who of all these parties are right; . . . If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?" ". . . I at length came to the determination to 'ask of God,' . . ." (Joseph Smith 2:10, 13.) He prayed. The results

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of that prayer are best described in Joseph's own words:

"... 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!*" (*Ibid.*, 2:17.) Joseph listened. Joseph learned. His question, "What is truth?" was answered.

Perhaps one of the most significant exchanges of question and answer occurred when Jesus was taken before Pilate. Pilate asked the Master, "Art thou a king . . . ?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.)

The True Church

Is the voice of the Lord heard today? How does it come to man? Can your search for truth be guided by his voice? Can mine? Today, as always when the true Church of Christ is on the earth, there stands at its head a prophet. And just as the voice of the Lord came to Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah, it has likewise come to latter-day prophets.

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.)

Do we need a prophet today? Does God regard his children today as dearly as he did when Amos, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were on the earth? One of the foremost educators in America, Dr. Robert Gordon Sproul, described the need in these words: "We have the peculiar spectacle of a nation, which to a limited extent, practices Christianity without actively believing in Christianity. We are asked to turn to the church for enlightenment, but when we do we find that the voice of the church is not inspired. The voice of the church today is the echo of our own voices. And the result of this experience already manifest is disillusionment. The way out is the sound of a voice, not our voice, but a voice coming from somewhere not ourselves in the existence of which we cannot disbelieve. It is the task of the pastors to hear this voice, cause us to hear it

and tell us what it says. If they cannot hear it or if they fail to tell us what it says, we as laymen are wholly lost. Without it we are no more capable of saving the earth than we were capable of creating it in the first place."

From still another field of endeavor, Sir Winston Churchill described the need: "I have lived perhaps longer experience than almost anyone and I have never brooded over a situation which demanded more patience, composure, courage and perseverance than that which unfolds itself before us today—the need of a prophet."

The Channel of Truth is Open

How grateful we should be that revelation, the clear and uncluttered channel of truth, is still open. Our Heavenly Father continues to inspire his prophets. This inspiration can serve as a sure guide in making life's decisions. It will lead us to truth.

You do not find truth groveling through error. Truth is found by searching, studying, and living the revealed word of God. We learn truth when we associate with truth. We adopt error when we mingle with error.

The Lord instructed us concerning how we might distinguish between truth and error when he said: "... that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.

"That which is of God is light; . . ." (D&C 50:23-24.)

Recently, I attended a large youth conference at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. A part of the conference was a testimony meeting where the young men and young women could express the feelings of the heart.

A shy boy from Saskatchewan, standing before such an imposing audience for the first time, said, "Before I attended this youth conference I could say, 'I think the gospel is true.' Then I received instruction, participated in the activities, and felt of the spirit of all of you. Today, at the conclusion of these inspired events, I proudly, yet humbly, declare 'I know the gospel is true.'" He had been edified. He had been enlightened. He had found the truth.

In July I visited the World's Fair at New York City. I found the fair most

interesting and took special note of the religious exhibits. At the Mormon Pavilion I sat by an alert young man of perhaps thirty-five years. We spoke about the other exhibits at the fair. Then the lights dimmed. The picture, "Man's Search for Happiness," commenced. At the conclusion of this portrayal of the plan of salvation, the lights again brought the present to our view. The crowd silently filed out, some stopping to wipe a tear from a moist eye. Others were visibly impressed. My visitor did not arise. I asked if he enjoyed the film. He answered, "This is the truth." One man's search for truth had just ended.

For those who humbly seek, there is no need to stumble or falter along the pathway leading to truth. It is well marked by our Heavenly Father. We must first have a desire to know for ourselves. We must study. We must pray. We must do the will of the Father. And then we will know the truth, and the truth will make us free. Divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it.

One week ago last Wednesday I was privileged to set apart William Agnew for his mission. I reviewed with him his conversion and that of his family, some five years ago in eastern Canada. The family had been seeking truth. The missionaries called and presented the teachings of the gospel. The members of the family studied. They loved what they learned. They were approaching the decision to be baptized. One Sunday morning the family, by previous appointment, were preparing to attend the "Mormon" Sunday School. Mother and the children readied themselves but were disappointed when Dad concluded not to attend. They even argued somewhat about the decision. Then Mother and the children went to Sunday School, and Dad angrily stayed at home. He first attempted to forget the misunderstanding by reading the newspaper, but to no avail. Then he went to his daughter Isabelle's room and turned on the radio which occupied her night stand, hoping to hear the news. He didn't hear the news. Rather, he heard the Tabernacle Choir. Elder Evans' message, it seemed, was directed personally to him. Brother Agnew realized the futility of his anger. He was now overpowered by a feeling of gratitude for the message he had just

received. When his wife and family returned home, they found him pleasant and happy. His children asked how this change had come about. He told them how he had turned on the radio, hoping to get the news, only to be humbled by the message of the choir in word and song. His daughter said, "Which radio did you use, Dad?" He answered, "The one on your night stand." She replied, "That radio is broken. It hasn't played for weeks." He led them to the room to prove that this radio did indeed function. Hadn't he just heard the choir and a message that had inspired and humbled him? He turned the proper dial. But that radio didn't play. Yet when an honest seeker after truth needed the help of God, that radio did play. The message which led to conversion was received. Needless to say, the family became stalwart members of the Church.

There will be those who doubt, who scoff, who ridicule, who scorn. They will turn from the pathway leading to eternal truth and rather travel the slippery slopes of error and disillusionment.

But to those who honestly seek, those to whom so much has been given, to the faithful, the Lord our God has promised:

"For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they . . . shall abide the day." (*Ibid.*, 45:57.)

May we be wise; may we persevere in search of truth and always take the Holy Spirit for our guide, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve has been our concluding speaker. The Relief Society Singing Mothers from the Juab, Sanpete, and Richfield areas, will now favor us with the beautiful anthem, "Eternal Life."

The benediction will be offered by Elder Horace A. Christiansen, formerly president of the Western States Mission, after which this Conference will stand adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.