

## CHURCH OF THE AIR

Columbia Broadcasting System's Church of the Air was presented at 7:35 a.m. Sunday, October 4, 1964. 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 Thomas S. Monson,

business, civic and church leader, and member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church. Music is by the Tabernacle Choir, directed by Richard P. Condie.

From the Tabernacle Choir we hear Campbell-Tipton's sincere and grateful song: "I Will Give Thanks Unto the Lord; with my whole heart will I praise thee, O God."

(The Choir sang: "I Will Give Thanks Unto the Lord"—Campbell Tipton.)

*Announcer:* We hear now on this Church of the Air service Elder Thomas S. Monson, member of the Council of the Twelve, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, sometimes identified as the Mormon Church. Today's talk is titled: "America Needs You."

## ELDER THOMAS S. MONSON

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

The opportunity to speak to you today brings with it a sense of responsibility which humbles me. I pray for the inspiration of the Lord.

Recently I was a passenger on a flight which took me from the Pacific across the continent to the Atlantic Ocean. At many points along the way, serenely seen through white, billowy clouds were the fertile patchwork fields and majestic mountains of this great land. The words of Katherine Lee Bates, author of "America the Beautiful," coursed through my mind and found lodgement within my soul.

"Oh beautiful for spacious skies,

For amber waves of grain,

For purple mountain majesties

Above the fruited plain!

America! America!

God shed his grace on thee

And crown thy good with brotherhood

From sea to shining sea."

The Lord Himself gave a divine promise to the ancient inhabitants of this favored country. He said:

"Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall

be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, . . ." (Book of Mormon, Ether 2:12)

Are we today serving the God of the land, even the Lord Jesus Christ? Do our lives conform with His teachings? Are we entitled to His divine blessings?

Headlines from America's leading newspapers depicting the events of the past year pass silently in review that you and I may judge.

"President Kennedy Assassinated."

"Alleged Assassin Murdered While In Custody of the Law."

"Serious Crime Registers 10% Increase In Past Year."

"Violence Rocks South."

"Racial Strife Hits East."

Murder, rape, arson, burglary, assault, narcotics violations are all on the increase in the America of today. These are the headlines of our newspapers.

One cannot help but compare the situation of today with conditions at the time of Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans.

The prophet Daniel rebuked Belshazzar: "And thou . . . , O Belshazzar,

hast not humbled thine heart, . . . But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified?" (Daniel 5:22-23)

He then interpreted the writing on the wall. ". . . God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. . . Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." (Daniel 5:26-27)

Too many Americans have been screaming ever louder for more and more of the things we cannot take with us and paying less and less attention to the real sources of the very happiness we seek. We have been measuring our fellowmen more by balance sheets and less by moral standards. We have developed frightening physical power and fallen into pathetic spiritual weakness. We have become so concerned over the growth of our earning capacity that we have neglected the growth of our character.

As we view the disillusionment that engulfs countless thousands today, we are learning the hard way what an ancient prophet wrote out for us 3,000 years ago. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: . . ." (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

The revered Abraham Lincoln accurately described our plight. "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us. We have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken succession, we have become too self sufficient to feel the necessity of preserving and redeeming grace, too proud

to pray to God that made us."

Can we extricate ourselves from this frightful condition? Is there a way out? If so, what is the way? We can solve this perplexing dilemma by adopting the counsel given by Jesus to the inquiring lawyer who asked, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matthew 22:36-39)

First, then I would suggest that each American love the Lord, our God, and with our families serve Him in righteousness.

The road back to God is not nearly so steep nor is it so difficult as some would have us believe. The gentle invitation of Jesus yet beckons, ". . . Come unto me." Paul advised that, ". . . he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)

The channel by which we seek Him and find Him is personal and family prayer. The recognition of a power higher than man himself does not in any sense debase him, rather it exalts him. Divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it. If we will but realize that we have been created in the image of God, we will not find Him difficult to approach. God did create ". . . man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Genesis 1:27) You cannot sincerely hold this conviction without experiencing a profound new sense of strength.

By seeking God in personal and family prayer we and our loved ones will acquire what the great English statesman, William H. Gladstone, described as the world's greatest need—"A living faith in a personal God."

Who can evaluate the real worth of such a blessing? This faith will light the pathway for any honest seeker of divine truth. Wives will draw closer to their husbands and husbands will the more appreciate their wives and children will be happy children as children are meant to be. Children in the homes

blessed by prayer will not find themselves in that dreaded never never land. Never the object of concern, never the recipient of proper parental guidance. Our children will be taught integrity which is primarily a matter of early training. To teach the young to love the truth above personal convenience is the basis of it. They will be taught true courage which becomes a living and attractive virtue when it is regarded not as a willingness to die manfully but as the determination to live decently. They will be taught honesty by habit and as a matter of course. Our children will be taught this way of living by parents who will not ask the child, "What will people think," but rather, "What will you think of yourself." Our children will grow physically from childhood to adulthood, and mentally from ignorance to knowledge, emotionally from insecurity to stability and spirituality to an abiding faith in God. Such is the power gained from loving the Lord, our God, and serving Him in righteousness.

Second, I would suggest that each American love his neighbor as himself. Before we can really love our neighbor we must get the proper perspective of him.

One man said, "I looked at my brother with the microscope of criticism and I said, 'How coarse my brother is.' I looked at my brother with the telescope of scorn and I said, 'How small my brother is.' Then I looked into the mirror of truth and I said, 'How like me my brother is.'"

Paul counseled us, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2) No burden is heavier to bear than is sin. When we show our brother, our neighbor, the way back to God through applying the divine principle of repentance, we help him to build a new and better life.

If we are not careful, our thoughts and plans to aid others in making this a better world in which to live will remain just that—thoughts and plans. As humans we cannot really see very far ahead and need, therefore, to take each step with all the wisdom we can muster. While sensing what lies dimly ahead, we must do confidently what lies clearly at hand. Decision is of little account

unless it is followed by action. If we procrastinate our lofty ambitions too long, we well might suffer the lament spoken by Jacob Marley's ghost in Dicken's immortal "A Christmas Carol." Speaking of Ebenezer Scrooge he said, "Not to know that any Christian Spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be will find its life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunities misused. Such was I, oh such was I."

One of the finest examples I know of helping one's neighbors is that of a prominent businessman who at the height of his success, generously gave his prosperous business to his faithful employees and determined to devote the balance of his life in charitable service. He withdrew from the world of gold and silver and each day can now be found at a large welfare distribution center doing his part to relieve the suffering and need of human souls and make America a better place in which to live. He is fulfilling the responsibility to "... succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees." (D&C 81:5) He humbly declares: "This is the happiest period of my life."

The rich satisfactions which come from loving our neighbor as ourselves are not ushered in at any age to the sound of drums and trumpets but rather the satisfaction grows upon us year by year, little by little, until at last we realize that we have it.

One of the most famous enlistment posters of World War II was one depicting Uncle Sam pointing his long finger and directing his piercing eyes at the viewer. The words read, "America Needs You." America truly does need you and me to lead out in a mighty crusade of righteousness. We can help when we love the Lord, our God, and with our families serve him, and when we love our neighbors as ourselves.

The frightening trend toward crime, lawlessness, and violence will then be arrested. God will continue to shed His grace on thee, America, and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea. I pray for this needed blessing in the name of Jesus Christ, the God of this choice land of liberty, Amen.