

Friday, October 1

First Day

It was a highly enlightening experience. I would like to know more about it to make a decision.

Words seem too inadequate to express the depth and beauty I see in your religion.

It was truly wonderful, and I am very impressed. I am considering looking into this religion more.

This is the word of the Lord and his prophet.

I have strong feelings that this is true—what has been said here, I seem to remember I lived before.

I was soul searching when I first saw the pavilion. I have since become a member of this Mormon Church.

I know this is the word of the Lord. I am grateful to you for this pavilion which meant my conversion to the Church.

The World's Need for the Kingdom of God

These comments are interesting and challenging to both church members and nonmembers alike. It should give all of us a real pride of belonging to the Church we testify to the world in all sincerity and solemnity as being the only true Church of Christ on earth today. Although church members have in the gospel the pearl of great price, yet complacency, inactivity, failure to keep the commandments will never save them. We must be doers of the word and not hearers only. Where much is given, much is expected. If we are true to the faith of our Lord, God will prosper his work and kingdom. The kingdom of God is the only hope of the world for under-

standing and peace. The menacing conflicts and threat of more and greater conflicts but presages the holocausts to follow. Man's ways are failing. Perhaps it is time for God's ways to take over now that all else seemingly is falling apart. The world needs the pearl of great price, which is God's kingdom, and it needs it today as never before.

Now brothers and sisters, may God bless and enlighten the earnest seekers for truth with faith to believe and with courage to accept when the truth is presented to them. We are the custodians of these great principles and truths. We have a tremendous responsibility of sharing what the Lord has revealed to us with our fellowmen. May we be true to this trust, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

You have just listened to Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve.

The chorus and congregation will now join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," after which Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

The Congregation and the Relief Society Singing Mothers joined in singing "We Thank Thee O God for a Prophet."

Elder Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve, will be followed by Elder Marion G. Romney of the Twelve.

ELDER ALVIN R. DYER

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

As we once again assemble in this historic building in the presence of the prophets of God, both departed and living, as we feel the surging faith of the Saints, we say to ourselves, Here is the peace that transcends all things. Here is found the true understanding. There is an ancient proverb that de-

scribes the opposite: "He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction." (Prov. 17:19.)

As we listened to the words of President McKay this morning, we were reminded of the influence that a good man can have upon another.

Being in his near presence recently brought to mind a verse that I have often associated with him.

"I saw him once, he stood a moment there,

He spoke a word that laid his spirit bare.

He grasped my hand then passed beyond my ken

But what I was I shall not be again."

(Author unknown.)

There are two particular declarations in the Articles of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that pertain to man's national conduct and spiritual behavior. Obedience to the mandates of the law referred to in one of the declarations and the spiritual instructions of the other provide for man his greatest opportunity for success, happiness, and real personal progress.

I refer first to the twelfth article: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."

Governmental agencies, both local and national, report the astonishing annual increases in crime and other flagrant violations of law and order. These violations, both individually and mass committed, have reached the point now where they affect the lives and security of every individual, if not directly, then indirectly. It is obvious that the causes of law violations stem from man's unwillingness to heed certain laws which he does not find compatible with the way he seeks to live. Few men break every law, and for that matter few men keep every law. The decaying drift in the modern man's way of life can perhaps be traced to the usurped right to live by the laws that he feels are good laws for him, rejecting and often violating the ones that he personally feels are bad laws.

"If Men Obey Only Laws They Like"

Charles E. Whittaker, associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, now retired, makes this significant statement concerning conditions

in America, and what is said of America in this regard may be rightly true in other lands where constituted law exists for the protection of the people. Says he:

"Obey the good laws, but breach the bad ones.' Who is to be the umpire that will determine which are good and which are bad? Does not that cliché invite men to violate the laws they do not like? If we allow men to obey only the laws they like, will we not be trading ordered liberty for chaos? Though we have, as we justifiably and proudly boast, a Government of laws and not of men, we must recognize that even this virtue can be lost, and that no man is protected by the law unless all are equally bound by and required to obey it. No man will be secure in his just rights if power is given to, or held to exist in, the Government to prefer some over others. Would not such a concept make a mockery of the constitutional doctrine of 'equal protection of the laws'?"

As a parallel to this, and with greater significance, I refer secondly to the other article pertaining to spiritual laws by which man may attain perfection in that kind of ordered, righteous existence extending to eternal life, as a continuance of premortal and mortal existence: "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." (Ninth article of faith.)

In the wise words of Paul the Apostle, we learn of a distinction between the laws of God and the laws of men. For the wisdom of God, ordained before the world was, is hidden unto man as man, as also are the things that God has prepared for man after mortal existence. Said Paul:

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

"Which none of the princes of this world knew: . . .

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

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teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:7-8, 13.)

The Meaning and Purpose

It is self-evident that from the beginning of man's placement into an earth-life existence, he has necessarily been under reliance upon God for direction. Thus, emanating from the center of all intelligence, from the presence or throne of God the Father, there has come unto man by revelation, which is the divine means of communication between God and man, the wisdom of the eternities pertaining to man's earth-life existence and his destiny.

An ancient prophet declared how this enlightenment would come unto man when he said, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.)

Unfortunately, however, man is not willing to accept all of the revelations from God. And often, as we have observed with regard to physical or natural laws, man assumes a position of selection as to which of the laws of God he will obey. Indicating how man from the beginning has tampered with and changed the laws of God to suit his own condition, Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, made this statement in Zurich in 1523, and it is as true today as then. Said he:

"From the remotest times God has made known His will to the human race. . . . This word is clear in and of itself; but by human additions and teachings it has, for years and especially in our time, been troubled and befogged, so that the greater part of these who are called Christians, know less of nothing than of the divine will, but know only an imagined worship and mistaken holiness based on externals alone." (Cited in James L. Barker, *The Protestors of Christendom*, p. 182.)

Revelation and Correction

Continuous revelations from God unto his servants the prophets in every dispensation of mortal time, and espe-

cially in our own day and times, is essential in preserving the purity of divine communications. The observed mutations that men have made with the divine laws that God has revealed for the salvation of mankind can be rectified only as God reinstitutes them. A people without this divine contact with God the Father or people who fail in obedience to divine communication from such contact cannot claim rightfully the distinction of belonging to his Church and kingdom.

May we paraphrase the words of Associate Justice Whittaker given in behalf of the laws of the land, but with application to the revelations from God. If men obeyed only the laws of God which they like, what would be the end? Would this not be trading the way to perfection for that of a watered-down existence that would portray men as living without purpose?

The ancient prophet Moroni, whose statue stands on the spire of the temple adjacent to this building, spoke of the expediency of revelation in this manner:

"And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues;

"Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them.

"For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing?" (Mormon 9:7-9.)

In a revelation given to Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, in June 1833, the Lord explains why certain ones who even had been ordained were not chosen. Said he: "They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day." (D&C 95:6.)

Similarly, those who are of the children of the light, having been made partakers of the revelations from God,

but who fail in obedience to them, walk in darkness at noonday.

Guidance from Revelation

An example of revelation from God concerns parents' responsibility to teach their children to walk uprightly before God and man. Anciently a prophet of God declared, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.) A full interpretation of this scripture implies righteousness on the part of the parents and a teaching of their way unto the children. In our own day and time, pre-empting a great need in the safeguarding of the lives of our children and the righteous stabilization of the family unit, which is the core of any civilization, the Lord has reinstated this divine communication unto parents, for said he:

"... I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth." (D&C 93:40.)

Speaking then of the disorder and the confusion that would come through the failure to heed this commandment of the Lord, he continued in these verses which were directed to an associate through the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"You have not taught your children light and truth, according to the commandments; and that wicked one hath power, as yet, over you, and this is the cause of your affliction.

"And now a commandment I give unto you—if you will be delivered you shall set in order your own house, for there are many things that are not right in your house." (*Ibid.*, 93:42-43.)

To the hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saint families who are obedient to this divine counsel, there is evolving order out of chaos in their family lives, righteous purpose out of lack of direction, a greater appreciation for each individual, which is pleasing unto God, and a greater sense of coordinated values, which builds personal strength, inducing a power of restraint against superficial things. Truly the righteous, well-ordered home, if the leaders of nations

could accept it, is the panacea for their most serious problems. Here is God, if we all will but accept it, communicating with his children and pointing the way.

Family Home Evening

In a letter recently received from the executive secretary of one of the large Christian denominations in America who upon request had been sent a complete digest of the Family Home Evening program of this Church as it has been printed, this was said: "The Family Home Evening program of the Mormon Church has lifted and inspired us."

Other revelations from God have been given and are continually being given unto the prophets, and by obedience to them, without screening or deleting those that seem unfavorable to us, we can find the answers and develop the power to fulfill our earth-life purpose.

To have a prophet of God in our midst, with the opportunity to follow his counsel and direction as he is inspired of God, is a compelling force. I remember, as a boy, attending a priesthood meeting with my father. I sat close by with my hand in his most of the meeting, especially since the speaker, Apostle James E. Talmage, spoke of the perils and deceptions of the last days which would try the faith of the members. One of the men in the meeting stood and asked Brother Talmage the question: "What will be the best thing for us to do in that day?" I shall never forget his answer.

"My brother, see that you follow the counsel and direction of the prophet, for he is God's representative upon the earth, and he will know."

I bear my testimony unto you that God has revealed his mind and will unto man in our own modern day, restoring divine laws, by obedience to which man can attain salvation and exaltation; that since the heralding of this last and greatest dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ by Joseph Smith unto this very minute, living prophets have been in communication

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with God for the salvation of the human race and have presided over his Church and kingdom here upon

the earth for this purpose. And this testimony I bear in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY
Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Brethren and sisters: I stand before you today in deep humility. The words I intend to speak will have little meaning unless they are impressed upon our souls by the power of the Holy Spirit. I sincerely invite you to join with me in praying that they will be so impressed.

To Gain Eternal Life

The theme I have in mind to discuss is "Making One's Calling and Election Sure." To do this one must receive a divine witness that he will inherit eternal life. The supreme objective of men who understand God, their relationship to him, and his designs for them is to gain eternal life. This is as it should be, for eternal life "... is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.) To bring men to eternal life is God's "work and glory." To this end he conceives, brings into being, directs, and uses all his creations. (Moses 1:38-39.)

Eternal life is the quality of life which God himself enjoys. The gospel plan, authored by the Father and put into operation by the atonement of Jesus Christ, brings eternal life within the reach of every man. The Lord gave this assurance when he said, "... if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, ..." (D&C 14:7.)

The fullness of eternal life is not attainable in mortality, but the peace which is its harbinger and which comes as a result of making one's calling and election sure is attainable in this life. The Lord has promised that "... he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come." (*Ibid.*, 59:23.)

I think the peace here referred to is implicit in the Prophet's statement,

"I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am calm as a summer's morning. I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men." (*DHC*, 6, 555.)

I also think it is implicit in this statement of the late Apostle Alonzo A. Hinckley which he wrote in a letter to the First Presidency after he had been advised by his physician that his illness would be fatal: "I assure you I am not deeply disturbed over the final results. I am reconciled and I reach my hands to take what my Father has for me, be it life or death. ...

"As to the future, I have no misgivings. It is inviting and glorious, and I sense rather clearly what it means to be saved by the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ and to be exalted by his power and be with him ever more." (*The Deseret News Church Section*, March 27, 1949, p. 24.)

Make Your Calling and Election Sure

Now I come directly to my theme: I take my text from Second Peter, and as he did, I direct my remarks "... to them that have obtained like precious faith with us. ..." (2 Peter 1:1.)

Peter, having put the Saints in remembrance of gospel fundamentals, admonished them to "... give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:" (*Ibid.*, 1:10.)

By making their calling and election sure, the Saints were to gain entrance "... into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." To this fact Peter bore powerful witness. He reviewed his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration with James and John, where, he says, they heard the voice of "... God the