

open these services by rendering "The Redeemed of the Lord." Following the singing the invocation will be offered by Elder Heber E. Peterson, president of the Olympus Stake.

I will ask Brother Tanner of the First Presidency to conduct the exercises this morning.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "The Redeemer of the Lord."

Elder Heber E. Peterson, president of the Olympus Stake, offered the invocation.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

First Counselor in the First Presidency

During the sessions of this conference, we have heard from many speakers who have discussed various inspiring subjects. We who speak in later sessions find that what we had intended to say has already been discussed, but there is one subject I would like to mention. We believe in peace, patriotism, and loyalty, and the fact that America is a chosen land, preserved and discovered under divine inspiration, with a constitution which we believe was inspired and which we must, under all circumstances, maintain.

Loyalty to Country

As this is a worldwide church, we counsel our members wherever they may live in other Christian countries to be patriotic and loyal to their homeland. Whatever may be said here about America, therefore, should be understood by members of the Church living in other countries as an appeal to all for loyalty and good citizenship.

Occasionally we hear derogatory statements about our government and ominous forebodings about the future of America. We are concerned when we see evidence of doubt, misgiving, and lack of confidence in the future of America as she faces current problems. We believe, however, that all good

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Our great Tabernacle Choir will now sing "The Marvelous Work" with Joan Ottley as soloist.

Singing by the Choir, "The Marvelous Work," Joan Ottley, soloist.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Our first speaker this morning will be President Hugh B. Brown, first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. He will be followed immediately by the Choir singing.

citizens of this country have a deep, heartfelt gratitude for the abundant blessings showered upon us by a benevolent Father. I should not like to be one of those who refuses to recognize the challenge of the problems of our times. On the other hand, I refuse to be numbered amongst those who are losing faith in America.

Let us remind you that the people of every country of every age and time throughout history have had to face up to problems and find their solutions. We believe that in the exercise of the freedom her people enjoy and with divine guidance, she will have full capability to solve any problems she encounters.

The God of this Land

This conclusion is not just our own. Our Heavenly Father has given us encouraging promises concerning this land. Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, he called this a land of promise to the people of our generation. However, to the Jaredites he made an important condition: ". . . if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. . ." (Ether 2:12.) This injunction cannot be overemphasized.

To the ancient inhabitants of this continent, he also said:

"Wherefore, I will consecrate this

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land unto thy seed, and them who shall be numbered among thy seed, forever, for the land of their inheritance; for it is a choice land, saith God unto me, above all other lands, wherefore I will have all men that dwell thereon that they shall worship me, saith God." (2 Nephi 10:19.)

We believe and have confidence in these words of the Lord. They bring us a message of confidence and hope. Each of us has the right to rely fully upon them, for he has said: ". . . I will fulfil my promises which I have made unto the children of men, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 10:17.)

The Constitution of the United States

Further reason for confidence is found in modern revelation wherein the Lord said that he had established the Constitution of the United States by the hands of wise men whom he raised up unto this very purpose. The constitutional framework of the law of this land has been the study of legal scholars and statesmen the world over. In no other document is the right and dignity of man lifted to so high a plane. Principles of freedom are inherent and fundamental to every concept. This did not just happen. To us the Constitution of the United States is God-given to the people of a promised land.

In the October (1965) issue of *National Geographic Magazine*, Professor Freidel of Harvard University calls attention to two of our great presidents. I quote:

"In the first two decades of the 20th century, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson endowed the American Presidency with a powerful leadership the Nation had not known since Lincoln. Several of their successors gave nostalgic tugs backward, but these two—one a Republican, the other a Democrat—established a pattern for succeeding strong Presidents.

"At home both sought a larger measure of political democracy and economic justice, and abroad a share in responsibility for world order. They moved to assume the sober duties of

the United States in its new status as an industrial giant and major world power. . . .

"Both these Presidents and their supporters, the progressive generation, believed that, without abandoning the free-enterprise system, they could perfect the dream of the Founding Fathers by combining a scientific approach to the problems of the age with positive Government action." (p. 537.)

"Obey, Honor and Sustain the Law"

We should understand that each of us has a duty to honor, support, and sustain our civil leaders and the law. The fact that everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion insofar as various matters of law and government are concerned does not relieve any of us of the personal responsibility to obey, honor, and sustain the elected governmental officers and the law which it is their duty to administer.

Unfortunately, there are those among us today who advocate breaking the law as one means of calling to the attention of the nation that some have not been given the full benefit of the law. They argue that the laws they break are minor and that the breach is useful and justified because it assists in the enforcement of a greater law. This reasoning is fallacious and inconsistent with Christian principles. To follow such thinking is to decide that every man is entitled to choose which law he will abide and which he will violate. No orderly society can be established on such theory. There are lawful ways and means of securing all human rights, and one does not foster Christian virtue through irresponsible breaking of the law. Seeds of anarchy are sowed in the minds of those who follow a lawless course. Anarchy was never the way of God but rather the way of Satan. Recent riots in various parts of our country emphasize this alarming trend. These lawless demonstrations are often instigated and led by misguided youth against authority, against discipline, against the orderly government of society and every symbol of authority. Let us heed the words

of that vigorous patriot Theodore Roosevelt, who said, "We are the government, you and I."

I quote a paragraph from *Destiny* magazine:

"Let us always remember that the planting of America in the strain that determined our country's character was a spiritual planting. The fathers who planted this nation were Christians. They came here as Christians. They came because they were Christians. They came on a specifically Christian venture. Get it fixed in your mind that the planting that determined the genius of America was a Church—not a town, not a colony, not a trading or exploring venture, not a gold rush, but a church, a little Pilgrim church crossed the sea for the sake of its church life. That is the origin of the United States."

America, Bulwark of Freedom

To those who are losing faith in America, to those who criticize her, we issue this challenge: Cast your eyes to the four corners of the earth. Can you see anything to compare with her? Where do you find greater evidence of freedom? In what land do the inhabitants have greater voice in governing themselves? Where do you see a way of life which has produced a greater abundance for its people? In which country do you find greater numbers of children receiving an excellence of education to surpass that which is to be found here? Where is there less want, less misery? Where in all the world do you find men who are given comparable rights to enjoy their freedom to worship as that freedom finds expression in the land of America? Can you really doubt that this land is in very deed a land of promise?

Let all men of goodwill offer constructive criticism to assist this great land of freedom in the solving of her problems. There will be problems, to be sure, but let these problems be solved with mature deliberation. Let those who speak out, speak in fairness. Let these problems and their proposed solutions be discussed in honest debate. All too often those who debate her

issues distort and magnify all out of proportion the subject of their concern. More than any other people, members of this Church, having the prophecies of God before them, ought to know that America is not going to fail, that the God of heaven will not permit it, if her people will but serve the God of this land. She has a great destiny yet to fulfill. Imperfect though she may be, she is, nevertheless, the hope of the world. Men of faint heart and blurred vision may from time to time lose sight of this fact. The fact itself, however, is immutable.

America has thus far been preserved because she is built upon a sound foundation, which was ordained of God himself. She is the cradle of freedom prepared by him for the restoration of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let all who have permitted discouragement or despair to enter into their hearts take renewed hope and courage. Let all honest men everywhere rally and support the cause of freedom and justice under the law.

Surely, as we face the future there is reason for concern, but there is no reason for despair. Let us find reason to lift, to build, and to uphold. Let us shrink from those whose only contribution is to complain, to condemn, and to destroy. To win the future will require men of faith, of courage, and of purpose. The Lord God of heaven will prosper and gloriously support such men. He will, however, find little reason to consider the activities of those who are barren and unproductive, who simply criticize, complain, and deplore. America needs leaders who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. In their hands she will be preserved. I would hope that they will recognize in her not only a great but a divinely inspired form of government. They will understand that she is adaptable to changing times. They will know that she has the capacity to maintain fundamental integrity while meeting the needs of a world in motion. They must be wise enough to know that she will not always be infallible, but they will have faith that once the error of her ways is made known, she will return

again to a wiser course of action. She will not stray far, for though the vision of her leaders may become obscure at times, the steadying hand of God will tide this nation through the troubled waters that may lie ahead.

The late Dr. Adam S. Bennion left us the following thoughtful statement: "America has become a great nation because the men who builded her believed in her—loved her—sacrificed for her. That same patriotism and pride, if kept vigorously alive, can carry us through our present crisis to even greater heights.

"The heart of America is sound. There are ills, of course. There are base men and mean. There always have been. But the land is full of honest, toiling men, and worthy, devoted women. Let's herald their integrity as well as proclaim the evils of our social structure." (*The Candle of the Lord*, p. 167.)

Face the Future Unafraid

Then let us prepare for the future unafraid. Let faith replace fears. Let courage dispel gloom. Let hope triumph over despair, and let faith in God the Eternal Father reign supreme above all our works. It is to him above all others that we owe final allegiance. The plain duty of our lives is to so conduct ourselves that more and more of his children will desire him and his ways. One day the world will come to recognize that the jewel in the crown of America which surpasses all others is the jewel of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, because through it men can come to know that their Father in heaven is real, that he loves them, and that he has prepared a place for them. If they but follow the path that leads to the straight gate, the joy that transcends all other joy awaits them.

Concerning this jewel I would like to make this further statement to our friends who have joined us today. To a modern prophet, the Lord revealed to the world that a great and marvelous work was about to come forth among the children of men. He said that the field was white all ready to harvest in

the reestablishment of his Church upon the earth. He exhorted all his children everywhere to ask him and promised that they should receive. He said, ". . . if you will knock it shall be opened unto you." (D&C 6:5.) He further counseled those to whom the message came to keep his commandments and to seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. He counseled us to seek not for riches, but for wisdom, and in so doing the mysteries of God would be unfolded unto us. (See *ibid.*, 6:7.)

The Great and Marvelous Work

We humbly advise you that this great and marvelous work is going forth in many parts of the earth today. In excess of twelve thousand young missionaries are laboring in your communities throughout the world. In their hearts burns a desire to speak with you, and they are anxious to tell you the full story of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are anxious to bring you evidence that our Father in heaven, the Father of all the inhabitants of the earth, is very real and that man was literally created in his image. These missionaries wish to share their knowledge of the risen Christ with you. They would like you to know that he is a being separate and distinct from his Father and that he actually lives today. He has restored to the earth the fullness of his gospel, including the full organizational structure of his kingdom.

These missionaries of the Church are likewise anxious to share their knowledge of the destiny of mankind, of the glorious things he has prepared for all his children who will give heed to his voice, who will follow him in the plain path which he has made known.

May I invite you to inquire of these missionaries of the Church concerning this marvelous work that they might make full explanation to you of the great message which has been revealed to the earth.

I cannot leave this subject without a sincere and heartfelt prayer that the spirit of Almighty God shall be upon

all men everywhere. May our lofty institutions, our matchless Constitution, our love of freedom and liberty be noted by other nations and, insofar as they can be made applicable, be adopted by them that all men everywhere may join us in singing what might well become an international anthem, "Our fathers' God to thee, Author of liberty, to thee we sing. Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light. Protect us by thy might, Great God, our King!" (Samuel F. Smith, "America.") That all may become the special concern of

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

The Choir sang "God Bless America."

President N. Eldon Tanner:

We have just listened to President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency, followed by the lovely number, "God Bless America," by our Tabernacle Choir.

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

The scholars of ecclesiastical history cannot date the time of the commencement of the Church of Christ. There is no specific event or any certain occurrence in the writings of the New Testament upon which they can agree as being the definite beginning. The Church came into existence over a period of time in which there were many important events. The groundwork was laid by a ministry which changed the lives and thinking of those who became the body of Christ. After the commencement of the ministry of Jesus, his followers were many. Mark said, "And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee." (Mark 1:28.)

The Time of Christ

He went from place to place teaching in the cities and in the synagogues, and the people gathered to hear him. They were impressed by his teachings and astonished by his power to heal the sick. He taught them as they came to ask questions, and he conversed with them in small groups along the way-side. On many occasions great multitudes gathered to hear the one who often called himself the Shepherd. Many believed upon him, and some he called to follow after him. Groups of believers sprang up in Jerusalem and in many other places.

This period of time becomes the focal point of history. We measure time by the years that have preceded Christ and by the years that have come after him. His life, teachings, death, and resurrection in the center of time have had a profound effect upon all those who have lived since his ministry and all those who died prior to his resurrection. The establishment of his Church has blessed all Christendom.

**"Some say that thou art John,
Elias, Jeremias"**

Some writers, seeking a doctrinal beginning rather than a specific event for the commencement of the Church of Christ, give great weight to the reply of the Lord when Peter bore his testimony that Jesus was the Christ. It was on the occasion when they were near Caesarea Philippi that Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (Matt. 16:13.) It doesn't seem reasonable to suppose that he didn't know what people thought and were saying about him. He was giving his disciples the opportunity to express their faith and to be strengthened. "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." (*Ibid.*, 16:14.)