

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder Bruce R.

McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder Sonne

ELDER ALMA SONNE

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters: Elder Kimball's remarks reminded me of the first memory gem I learned in Primary:

"Defer not till tomorrow to be wise, Tomorrow's sun to thee may never rise."

(William Congreve,
Letter to Cobham.)

Economically, the world at present is disturbed about inflation. And it has been stated that only a spiritual revival can prevent it from becoming a catastrophe. I am sure a spiritual revival would solve many problems in our country and elsewhere.

Thrift, self-reliance, work

But when all is said and done, the best hedge against inflation is the character of the people. New ideas, new methods, new departures from the beaten path will come and go, but fundamental things like thrift, self-reliance, and hard work will be restored in the final solution. Security does not come without preparation. Health and happiness cannot be bought or given. They are products of service and sacrifice. Only righteousness can exalt a nation and an individual. History has so proved. This was true 3,000 years ago and it is true today.

Economist testifies of value of righteousness

Roger Babson once said: "When Jesus appealed to people to give to the poor, He . . . had in mind the good of the giver even more than the good of the recipient." (Roger W. Babson, *If Further Inflation Comes* [Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1950], p. 201.)

He also said that the safest hedge

against inflation is the Ten Commandments, especially the last, "Thou shalt not covet. . . ." He refers to changes that have come, like universal suffrage, the increase in transportation by means of the automobile and the airplane, the increase in vision through motion pictures and television. "Hearing," said he, "has multiplied a thousand times through the radio. Yet in the same period there has been almost no increase in the nation's character. . . . A sane faith and philosophy of life is of greater economic importance than the gold content of the dollar." (*Ibid*, p. 205.)

"Serve the God of this land"

I believe the United States of America will be free from bondage, economic and otherwise, ". . . if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. . ." (Eth. 2:12.) There is only one plan by which humanity can be saved and preserved, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ in all of its wide ramifications.

We have moved forward so rapidly in the various avenues that we have lost our bearings. Thoughtlessness and expediency dominate our efforts to succeed.

The other night I asked a group of teen-agers to read the story of the Prodigal Son. Charles Dickens said: "It is the most beautiful story ever told." It is not difficult to picture that wayward son as he returned to his home, disappointed and ashamed—in rags and tatters. He had lost his inheritance, he had wasted his substance in riotous living, he had thrown away his opportunities, and he was now back where he started.

I reminded these youngsters that the greatest tragedy in human experience is a misspent life. Haphazard use of

time, money, and energy means a poor return, devoid of satisfaction and fraught with failure and uncertainty. The young people to whom I refer are the homemakers of tomorrow and the future citizens of our country.

Honor sacred covenants

To me there is no grander spectacle in this world than that of a young man and a young woman kneeling at the altar and joining hands in holy wedlock and pledging to each other their love and devotion for time and all eternity. It makes for stability. Such a union is not easily severed. It is a sacred covenant which cannot be broken except by sin and wrongdoing.

There is an old proverb that reads: ". . . thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down. . . ." (Deut. 24:13.) In modern language it means: Keep your promises and hold sacred your covenants.

The task before us is to safeguard the moral and spiritual agencies required to preserve a healthy and God-inspired civilization.

The rock-foundation of such a civilization is a firm faith in the true and living God. Without such faith the soul has no anchorage and life has no purpose.

The unbeliever has no program,
He sees no future, he prepares for none;

He does not hear the voice of the prophets,

He has not looked beneath the crust of things,

He flounders and stumbles,

He lives in a vacuum;

He has no road to the future

And no rewards for right living.

He is negative, doubtful, and unprogressive. To him death is the end, and all hope is gone.

Avoid pitfalls of skepticism

To avoid the pitfalls of skepticism, our faith must be nourished and fostered by prayerful investigation, diligent research, and scriptural study, for God's plan of regeneration must be known to his children. Men cannot be saved in ignorance. The Church sup-

plies the means and facilities for our growth and development. We are living in a day when our faith in the eternal values must be strengthened. We build our own fortifications against evil.

The great work which our Eternal Father has founded is destined to fill the whole earth. It will not fail, and no power, however great, can stop its progress. Small as it was in the beginning, destitute of influence and worldly advantages, it is a power that will continue to grow and increase. It will go forward through the power that is in it.

It cannot be understood unless it be "viewed with the eye of faith," for it is the product of faith. In other words, the person or persons who seek to understand it must have some knowledge of the power that founded it, the power that sustains it, and the power that goes with it in its operations in the world.

He will never forsake you

The Lord will never forsake his servants who stand at the head of his Church in any hour of extremity, when even strong men are tested and tried and when calamities and upheavals are threatening the stability and wisdom of men and nations.

Faith in God, in the immortality of the soul, and in the words of the prophets, living and dead, is more than a passive belief. It is the motive power in men's lives.

A man of faith makes decisions every day because of that faith; he knows where he is going; he rejects the unproven sophistries of the world; he can withstand the infidelity, the cynicism, the ridicule, and the groundless arguments of those who live without responsibility to God and without a program to guide them through the journey of life.

Those who deny God and his manifestations are a multitude in our day. They proceed without guide or compass. Their aims and ambitions are centered in the things of earth, and their conception of right and wrong is blurred.

The mission of the Church

Our mission as a Church is to teach the unbelievers and the uninformed the message of faith as it pertains to the gospel and the divine callings of Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith.

There is no other way, and the Church feels keenly its responsibility in this respect.

As a boy I remember attending church in a modest meetinghouse built by the early settlers of Cache Valley. My memory of that old chapel is very dim, but I recall the design painted on the wall behind the stand. On it were three messages.

In bold lettering on the top were the words: "Holiness to the Lord." It suggested worship. Below this expression of faith was another one which read: "Truth will prevail." Still further down and near the bottom were the words: "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." To me as a boy it meant one thing, the restored gospel of Christ. Truth was synonymous with Mormonism so called, and a revealed truth.

The power of faithfulness

I think, generally speaking, it was the opinion of all the Latter-day Saints who met there. They were solid and sound in their beliefs. They were now free to worship God in their own way. Their chief concern was the success of their settlements made ". . . far away in the West. . ." ("Come, Come, ye Saints," *Hymns*, 13.) As I read their history and review their achievements, I conclude they were not mistaken nor led astray by selfish leaders. They had

found the truth—the truth which, as Jesus taught, would make them free.

They read the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, and modern revelations. The contents of these books were facts, not opinions. The prophets did not speculate. They spoke as one who knows. There are no books so positive and forthright as the scriptures, modern and ancient. The prophets did not support their messages by argument. These messages were self-evident.

Most of the pioneers who came to the valleys of the mountains are now gone. They had faced relentless opposition and severe persecution, but here they were in their Zion, worshipping the true and living God. It was all in fulfillment of prophecy and they were happy and satisfied. Their spirit was unconquerable, their faith never flagged, and their perseverance and powers of endurance were remarkable. Their example of devotion and steadfastness has not been in vain. As a people we are proud of their achievements. We are equally proud of present accomplishments, and we glory in the prospects for the future.

May God's kingdom grow and increase until the earth is full of those who love the Lord their God, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us.

Brother McConkie—

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

An apostle is a special witness of Christ. This morning we heard President David O. McKay, the senior apostle of God on earth, bear an inspired and fervent testimony of the divine sonship of our Lord.

Sixty years an apostle

I think it would be of interest to the conference to know that it was on April 9, 1906, exactly 60 years ago today, that President David O. McKay was