

go home, I promise you that within a year from now you will be in America with your family, earning three times what you are earning now."

He said, "That's a good enough promise for me." And he was baptized. He said that he didn't see how it could happen—he was under contract with his company to work for three years, and he knew he wouldn't break his contract. But he was able to have his contract bought off, and the company released him. Within one year he was in America with his family, earning four times as much as he was when that Mormon missionary promised him three times as much. I told that story a few years ago from this pulpit. At the close of the meeting one of the mission presidents sitting right down in front came up to me and said, "Brother Richards, I was the young man who made the promise."

Brothers and sisters, I say to you that if you will love the Lord and serve him and keep his commandments, you never can get out of the red—you will always be owing the Lord something. He has a way of paying and compensating that is worth more than all the

wealth of this world. And this is my testimony to you. I know this is the work of God, the Eternal Father. I know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ. I am so proud to be one of his witnesses. I leave you my witness in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

We have just listened to Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir will now favor us with "Rejoice and Merry Be." Following the singing Elder Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency will address us.

Selection by the Choir, "Rejoice and Merry Be."

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Hugh B. Brown, first counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, will now address us.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Many of the speakers during this conference have referred to the celebration of Easter and the resurrection of the Lord. Yesterday the President of the Church preached a powerful sermon on the fact of the resurrection of Christ. This morning we join with millions of people throughout the world in celebrating Easter in commemoration of this miraculous event. This is a time when we should re-examine and reaffirm our faith and rededicate our lives to Christ's service.

The scriptures testify of Him

His birth into mortality and the details of his death and resurrection are well-attested facts of history. In addition to the New Testament story of these miraculous events, the scriptures,

both old and new, abound with inspired predictions concerning his second coming.

Let us examine the basis of our faith as it is to be found in the Holy Bible and other sacred records and attempt to evaluate and coordinate the antemortal, the mortal, and the postmortal life of this transcendent personage.

The Apostle John tells us that the Word—which he identifies as the Savior—was with God in the beginning. This is a precise and unambiguous declaration, not only that he was with God in the beginning, but that he himself was invested with the powers and rank of godship and that he came into the world and dwelt among men. He was the Creator of all that is.

Jesus himself frequently referred to the fact of his preexistence. For example, he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38.)

And then in that greatest of all prayers, recorded in John 17:5, we find the poignant plea: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

At another time he chidingly spoke to his uncomprehending followers and said: "Doth this offend you?"

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (John 6:61-62.)

These and other proofs of Christ's preexistence confirm our faith that all men had a spiritual existence before mortal birth and that the souls of all men are immortal. Obviously, if the spirit had an existence before the body was created, that spirit is capable of independent existence after the body dies.

Assurance of the resurrection

The fact that he came forth from the tomb with spirit and body reunited was positively stated and demonstrated by the risen Lord when he appeared to his amazed apostles and said, "... handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24:39.)

This gives divine assurance that we too, through his atoning sacrifice, shall partake of the blessings of the resurrection. Harken to his promise when he said,

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. . . ." (John 11:25-26.)

And again, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

Though some deny, we affirm

His divinity

In these times of uncertainty, con-

flict, chaos, and confusion, where there is unprovoked aggression, attempted subjugation, and enslavement, when people are being denied their freedom and their liberties, and especially when whole nations of men, including some of the clergy, pride themselves on their atheism, deny the existence of God, speak of Christ as a myth and of religion as an opiate, when increasing numbers of men are declaring that God is dead and others are asking whether he in fact ever lived—in times like these we must reexamine and re-emphasize our faith in Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, and conform our lives to his teachings and emulate his matchless example.

Indicative of the lack of faith, the confused and muddled thinking, and the dangerous teachings of some religious leaders, I quote from the February 22, 1966, issue of *Look* magazine (pp. 25-29):

"Last September, the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of California left on sabbatical for Cambridge University in England 'to find out what I really do believe.' . . .

"What he believes is hardly typical of a bishop. 'I've jettisoned the Trinity, the Virgin Birth and the Incarnation,' he told *Look* in his Cambridge flat recently. . . .

"The inquiry has inevitably led the Bishop to the enigma of Christ Himself. He sees Him not as Jesus among the lilies in a stained-glass window, but as a country carpenter turned itinerant preacher for three powerful years. . . .

"Cambridge University, where [the] Bishop . . . is staying, is the womb of what has been proclaimed—and condemned—as the 'new theology.' . . . Its innovators, mainly Cambridge dons, are reacting to a society throttled by secularism. Only ten percent of the English attend church. . . .

"The old theology starts with the divinity of Christ and tries to explain how God became man. The new theology starts with the only indisputable fact—that Christ was man—and tries to show how God acted through Him uniquely."

We reaffirm our faith in the Bible

as the word of God. We believe in its teachings, its doctrines, its definitions, and its revelations of an omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient God. The fact that man was created in his image confirms our faith that he is a living and personal God. He is our Eternal Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the promised Messiah.

We proclaim the preexistence and divine nature of Jesus the Christ, the purpose of his earth life, the reality of his resurrection and ascension, and the certainty of his second coming as eternal and well-attested truths and prophetic promises. They have illuminating and inspiring significance for our troubled world. They are our heritage from the Judeo-Christian world, clarified and amplified by modern revelation.

They are relevant to our time. This is an age of conflict of ideology, a time of ferment in technology, a period of startling and revolutionary progress in science—an era when at last the means lie at hand to free mankind from the ancient shackles of pain and hunger, fear and war. But the true crisis of our times lies at a deeper level. All this freedom and so-called elbowroom only thrusts upon us with additional force the fundamental issues of our faith.

**The Fatherhood of God,
Godhood of Christ,
Brotherhood of Man,
we affirm**

There must be a reaffirmation of the truths concerning the fatherhood of God, the godhood of Christ, and the brotherhood of man—*truths for which the Savior lived and died*. Brotherhood—love of God and fellowmen—will make men free and establish peace in a world that is threatened with a devastating and final war.

The truculent and blasphemous attempts of the Communists to erase Christ from their literature and to expunge all memory of him from the hearts and minds of men must fail, for as God made man in his own

image, so his image is indelibly stamped upon the souls of men, and instinctively they know that they are the immortal sons of God, predestined to be free. This inborn conviction accounts for the courageous and undiscourageable resiliency of many persecuted people.

The challenge of evil leading inevitably to chaos, confusion, and defeat tends to make the relevance of Christ's life and message more apparent, the application of his divine teachings more urgent, and eventual victory beyond question.

As Paul said, the time would come when "every knee should bow . . .

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:10-11.)

Prophecy and history testify

A comprehensive knowledge of prophecy (which is but history foretold) and of history (which is often prophecy fulfilled) confirms the fact that God lives. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible contains the continuing story of God's dealings with his universal family, his begotten children.

Christ came to earth and glorified the Father, finished the work that was given him to do, and at the end asked only that he be glorified with the Father with the glory that he had with him before the world was. (John 17:3-5.)

Christians everywhere should believe and be guided by the revelations of God given through his prophets, whether on the eastern hemisphere or in the western world. The peoples in the western world are they to whom he referred as "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16.)

The United States of America and her allies have been forced to take up arms in defense of liberty and freedom. The scriptures, both ancient and modern, justify defending the liberties and freedom of ourselves and our weaker neighbors.

The various presidents of the United States, regardless of party, have declared that we have no desire for territorial gain or acquisition nor the subjugation of weaker nations. We stand for freedom and liberty for all, together with the right of untrammelled self-determination—all in the interest of permanent world peace.

The President of the United States recently restated and underlined this policy and disclaimed any intent on the part of the United States to gain empire, bases, or dominion. This is in strict harmony with the word of God given to ancient prophets, some of whom were kings, generals, and leaders of armies.

We concur in what was said by one of them on the subject of freedom, as recorded in Alma 61:14:

"Therefore, . . . let us resist evil, and whatsoever evil we cannot resist with our words, yea, such as rebellions and dissensions, let us resist them with our swords, that we may retain our freedom, that we may rejoice in . . . the cause of our Redeemer and our God."

Universality of God's care

The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches the universality of God's concern for men and that obedience is a universal and fundamental law of progress, both temporal and spiritual. The aristocracy of righteousness is the only aristocracy that God recognizes. This leaves no room for self-righteous expressions in words or actions of being "holier than thou." There is a real unity in the human race, and all men have a right to equal consideration as human beings, regardless of their race, creed, or color.

For any church, country, nation, or other group to believe that it is the only people in whom God is interested or that it has special merit because of color, race, or belief, that they are inherently superior and loved by God, without regard to the lives they live, is not only a great and dangerous fallacy but is a continuing barrier to peace. This is demoralizing, whether it is the exploded and presumptuous myth of an Aryan race of supermen or disguised in more subtle forms. Let us

steadfastly avoid such demoralizing arrogance.

The most important problem facing us in working out a long-range program for peace is a tolerant and sympathetic understanding between races and creeds. As Thomas Bracken wrote:

"O God, that men would see a little clearer,
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see!
O God, that men would draw a little nearer
To one another! They'd be nearer Thee,
And understood."

("Not Understood. We Move Along Asunder," *Latter-day Saint Hymns* [1927], No. 352.)

It is regrettable that very few people in the world are free from the idea that they and their people and race are superior. The people on this continent were instructed that they should not hiss nor spurn nor make game of any remnant of the house of Israel, "for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn." (3 Nephi 29:8.)

We have fought two world wars and numerous other engagements to secure freedom and self-determination for ourselves and others, and yet we know the same old satanic forces are at work to destroy the peace and prosperity of the human family. We cannot have peace in the world until we have tolerance and understanding. The happiness we seek can only be found in righteousness, for wickedness never was happiness. There is no ledger-deman method of getting blessings.

We are reminded by one of the prophets that if men die in their wickedness, they will be cast off as to things that are spiritual and must be brought to stand before God to be judged of their works. If their works have been filthiness, they must be filthy, and if they be filthy, it must be that they cannot dwell in the kingdom of God; there cannot be any

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unclean thing enter into that kingdom. (1 Ne. 15:33-34.)

Christ will come again

Having briefly considered then his preexistence, his mortal birth, his transcendent ministry, his crucifixion and miraculous resurrection and ascension, let us look to the future: is his work finished or is he still active and interested in the affairs of men? will he appear again on this earth?

The scriptures are replete with predictions and warnings concerning this event, but time will permit us to refer to but few of them.

Job said, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. . . ." (Job 19:25.)

And Isaiah promises, ". . . behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." (Isa. 35:4.)

In Malachi we read, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. . . ." (Mal. 3:1.)

We find many references to his second coming in the New Testament. Near Bethany, at the time of the ascension of the Lord, a prediction was made by the angel: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)

In Matthew 25:31 we read, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. . . ."

Luke tells us that great events shall precede his coming: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

"Men's hearts [shall fail] them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." (Luke 21:10, 26-27.)

And the Apostle Paul tells us in

Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. . . ."

The Savior himself on many occasions predicted his return to earth. In Matthew 16:27 we read, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

After referring to the signs that would precede his coming, he said, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30.)

We humbly, but without any equivocation, add our own witness to the testimonies of the apostles and prophets of old that God is not dead but is gloriously alive, and that Jesus Christ not only did live, but that he still lives, that he is a personal being, that he will triumphantly come again with his resurrected, glorified body still bearing the marks of the crucifixion.

We humbly repeat what we often sing: "I know that my Redeemer lives! He lives, all glory to his name! He lives, my Savior still the same; O sweet the joy this sentence gives: 'I know that my Redeemer lives!'" to which I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

He who has just addressed us is President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency of the Church.

The Tabernacle Choir and congregation will now join in singing "Now Let Us Rejoice in the Day of Salvation," with Richard P. Condie conducting and Alexander Schreiner at the organ, following which we shall have a brief organ interlude.

The Choir and congregation sang, "Now Let Us Rejoice in the Day of Salvation."