

## President David O. McKay

My dear brethren of the priesthood:

When we realize that *eighty-five thousand* or more members of the priesthood of the Church are assembled in this historic Tabernacle, the Assembly Hall, and in 472 other buildings throughout the United States and Canada, each one of whom can say in his own heart, "I know that my Redeemer lives," we can sense, at least dimly, the strength of this Church; for upon the priesthood rests the entire structure of the Church of Jesus Christ. This vast assembly of priesthood members of itself is an inspiration, especially when you contemplate its significance and realize that in the brotherhood of Christ we are all one, supporting one another. It is truly sublime!

I pray for your sympathy, for your faith and prayers, and above all, for the inspiration of the Lord, that the message I give may be of interest and contributive to the advancement of God's work.

### The mission of the Church

The mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may be considered in two great aspects: (1) the proclamation to the world of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ—the declaration to all mankind that God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared in this dispensation to the Prophet Joseph Smith; (2) the other great purpose of the Church is to translate truth into a better social order or, in other words, to make our religion effective in the individual lives of men and in improving social conditions.

It is the first great purpose to which I wish to call attention this evening.

On a momentous occasion two thousand years ago, eleven men assembled near a mountain in Galilee—eleven humble, obscure men who had been chosen and ordained apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. According to appointment, these men met the resurrected Christ, who made what to them must have been a startling declaration. They had been with their Master fewer than three years and had been ex-

pressly enjoined by him to go not in the way of the Gentiles, to enter no city of the Samaritans, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matt. 10:6.) At this meeting, however, as his final parting instructions, he opened their eyes to the universality of the gospel by giving them this divine commission:

### The Divine charge

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19-20.)

In the restricted experience of these eleven disciples, the idea of preaching Christ and his saving doctrine to any but members of their own race germinated very slowly. Indeed, the Savior of men found it necessary to give another direct revelation to Peter, the chief apostle, before he fully realized that the Gentiles "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15:7.)

However, as the light of truth dawned in their hearts, these earnest followers set about to give the gospel to the world—"twelve simple men, with only the wind to bear them over the seas, with only a few pence in their pockets, and a shining faith in their hearts. They fell far short of their ideal, their words were twisted and mocked, and false temples were built over their bones, in praise of a Christ they would have rejected. And yet, by the light of their inspiration many of the world's loveliest things were created, and many of the world's finest minds inspired." (Beverly Nichols, *The Fool Hath Said* [New York: Doubleday, 1936].)

### Ravages of time and change

The followers of the Redeemer were reviled, persecuted, and martyred, but they continued to testify to the truth of their risen Lord.

Three hundred years passed, and Christianity became the dominant religion of the most powerful nation in the world, and the persecuted became the persecutors. Pride and worldliness supplanted humility and faith. The church became corrupt. Doctrines of men supplanted the commandments of God; spiritual darkness enshrouded the nations of the world.

Later, courageous, God-fearing men began to protest against the evil practices of a corrupt clergy. The dawn of a spiritual awakening appeared, but none either claimed or received divine authority to re-establish the Church.

Roger Williams, pastor of the oldest Baptist Church in America, resigned his position because, said he, "There is no regularly constituted church on earth, nor any person authorized to administer any church ordinance; nor can there be until new apostles are sent by the Great Head of the Church, for whose coming I am seeking." (From *Picturesque America*, page 502.)

### The return of authority

We know that that authority came early in the nineteenth century by the personal appearance of the risen Lord. Again was given the divine injunction for authorized servants to be sent forth to the East and to the West, to the North and to the South that "every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world; That faith also might increase in the earth; That mine everlasting covenant might be established; That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers." (D&C 1:20-23.)

In Section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation that "behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.

"Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day." (D&C 4:1-2.)

When this revelation was given to the Prophet Joseph, he was only 23 years of age. The Book of Mormon

was not yet published; no man had been ordained to the priesthood. The Church was not organized; yet the statement was made and written without qualification that "a marvelous work [was] about to come forth among the children of men."

Another significant feature of this revelation, and of others given about the same period, is the naming of essential qualifications of those who were to participate in the bringing about of this marvelous work. These qualifications were *not the possession of wealth, not social distinction, not political preferment, not military achievement, not nobility of birth; but a desire to serve God with all your "heart, might, mind and strength"*—spiritual qualities that contribute to *nobility of soul*. I repeat: No popularity, no wealth, no theological training in church government—yet "a marvelous work [was] about to come forth among the children of men."

### The power accompanying the marvelous work

*Manifestly, some higher power was operating to bring about this marvelous work other than through mere human and material means.*

The same charge that was given by the risen Lord to his authorized disciples more than nineteen hundred years ago has been given by direct revelation to his authorized servants today.

### Missionary work prospers despite adversity

Though the Church is still young and has had to struggle through persecution, mobocracy, drivings, poverty, misrepresentation by egotists, uninformed preachers, apostates, and by a prejudiced public sentiment, it is moving steadily forward toward its worldwide destiny. Almost immediately after the organization of the Church, the proclamation of the restored gospel began. The Church was scarcely seven years old before the scope of missionary work had included the United States, Canada, and the British Isles.

Since that humble beginning in

1830, 75 missions, including one in Italy that has just recently been organized, have been established throughout the world. Our missionaries, each paying individually, or with the aid of his parents, his or her own expenses, are now declaring to a troubled world that the message heralded at the birth of Jesus—"peace on earth, good will toward men"—may become a reality here and now by obedience to the principles of the gospel.

They are instructed that they go out as representatives of the Church, as representatives of their families, and most important, as representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose servants they are. They are instructed that a representative of any organization, economic or religious, must possess at least one outstanding quality, and that is *trustworthiness*.

These missionaries go out in the spirit of love, seeking nothing from any nation to which they are sent—no personal acclaim, no monetary acquisition.

What is the outstanding message that they have to give Christian, as well as non-Christian, countries? There must surely be something distinctive to justify their presence in all parts of the world.

### Declare the divine mission of the Lord Jesus Christ

First, they are to declare the divinity of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Redeemer and Savior of mankind. They declare with Peter of old that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

### Declare the restoration of the Gospel

The second distinctive message is the restoration of his gospel by the appearance of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and that divine authority through the priesthood has been given to represent Diety in establishing Christ's Church upon the earth. Thus, they are fulfilling to the best of their ability the injunction to preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded.

True Christianity is love in action. There is no better way to manifest love for God than to show an unselfish love for our fellowmen. This is the spirit of missionary work. Our hearts respond with the poet:

"O Brother Man! fold to thy heart  
thy brother;  
Where pity dwells, the peace of God  
is there;  
To worship rightly is to love each  
other,  
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed  
a prayer."

(From "Worship," by  
John Greenleaf Whittier.)

### These declarations to the world

This, then, is a worldwide Church, organized preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. God has given us the power of whispering across space, of transmitting our thoughts within minutes from one end of the earth to another. Geographical conditions or distances are just the same, but modern means of transportation have made practically all nations neighbors.

### Modern means of declaration

Now, I am going to ask Brother Bernard P. Brockbank of the Church Information Committee and Brother Arch L. Madsen, president of Church broadcasting, to tell you what the Church is doing to disseminate the gospel by these modern means through our church information service and broadcasting facilities.

May God bless you men of the priesthood. God bless our missionaries and brethren everywhere for their willingness to consecrate their time, their means, and their ability to the advancement of the kingdom of God.

I bear you my testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and when I say this, it means that I know that Jesus lives, that he is our Redeemer, and that this is his Church. We are merely his representatives.

Saturday, October 1

Second Day

When we accept that, then the reality of God the Father, the Father of our spirits, is easy to accept.

With all my heart I bless you, and pray that peace and love and kindness will abide not only in your hearts but in your homes, that your wives, our

wives, and our children, may have memories sweet of a home in which God would be pleased to dwell.

May this be our lot, our experience throughout the Church in all the world, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

Brethren in the priesthood: Isn't it marvelous to hear the great vision of a great Prophet? My, how he sees the great scope of the work to be done on this earth by the priesthood holders! Brethren, I hope you sense deeply in your hearts the power and the responsibility that you have.

As President McKay opened the conference yesterday, he made this statement: "A proper conception [of the sacredness of the individual] would change the attitude of the world to the benefit and happiness of all human beings." "A proper conception of the sacredness of the individual,"—in the image and likeness of Deity.

The Apostle Paul tells us of the holiness and sacredness of the individual when he said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Cor. 3:16-17.)

Paul also said to the Corinthian Saints, ". . . know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19.)

We were created by God in his likeness and image, and we should not stand alone, but we should stay close with even the loyalty and love of a child to our Creator and Heavenly Father. The Creator is not without obligation to that which he created, and we who hold the priesthood of God have a great, important responsibility to our Lord and to his children. Only through priesthood holders, such as you, can God's children receive baptism by water and the gift of the

Holy Ghost. Both are essential, according to Jesus Christ, for entrance back into the kingdom of heaven. And, of course, we know that many other great blessings are attached to the priesthood.

We are called to help build the Church and kingdom of God on this earth. We who hold the priesthood literally need to be our brother's keeper. The day in which we live is the dispensation of the fullness of times. "The dispensations of the fullness of times is made up of all the dispensations that ever have been given since the world began, until this time." (Letter by David W. Patten, *Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 220.)

### Magnitude of the charge

In 1830, near the opening of this dispensation, there were approximately a billion people on the earth; 137 years later, today, over three and a half billion; by 1970, four billion; and it is predicted, by men who know what they are talking about, that by the turn of the century, 2000 AD, there will be seven billion of God's children upon this earth.

It is a great and glorious period of time for the righteous and an era when the unrighteous will also prosper.

The President also declared in his opening message at this conference that this "is a glorious age in which to live, but no thinking man will doubt that this age is fraught with limitless perils, as well as with untold possibilities."

### To "teach all nations"

After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, prior to his departure