

meetings will be held, where practicable, this evening in the various wards.

Just a reminder again about driving in the city and on the highways. Please obey the traffic rules. Good manners, patience, and alertness are necessary if we are to reduce the number of automobile accidents.

Elder Robert R. McKay, who has read so beautifully the inspiring messages of his father, our President and a

prophet of God, will now read his concluding address to us, after which the Tabernacle Choir will favor us with "Still, Still with Thee," and "Now the Day Is Over," conducted by Richard P. Condie.

The benediction will be offered by Elder Paul Wendell Ahlstrom, president of the Idaho Falls Stake, after which this Conference will stand adjourned for six months.

President David O. McKay

(Read by his son Robert R. McKay)

The hour is now drawing to a close wherein this great annual conference of the Church soon will have become an event of the past. The sessions themselves will be mere history, but we pray that the messages given will ever remain on the tablets of our memories and will become moving factors in our daily lives.

All that has been said and done, all the testimonies borne have directly or indirectly led to this divine admonition—" . . . seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.)

The center of our lives

Let us make God the center of our lives. That was one of the first admonitions given when the gospel was first preached to man. To have communion with God, through his Holy Spirit, is one of the noblest aspirations of life. It is when the peace and love of God have entered the soul, when serving him becomes the motivating factor in one's life and existence, that we can touch the lives of others, quickening and inspiring them, even though no word be spoken. There is operative in the world a spiritual force as active and as real as the waves that have carried the messages of this conference over a vast network of television and radio stations.

To foster happiness, subdue self

May we realize as never before that mastery of one's personal inclinations

is the heart of the Christian religion and of all religions. By nature the individual is selfish and inclined to follow his immediate impulses. It requires religion, or something higher than an individual or even a society of individuals, to overcome the selfish impulses of the natural man, which will lead him to a more successful, fuller life. Self-mastery comes through self-denial of little things. Christ in these singular words said: ". . . whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:25.) Whenever you forget self and strive for the betterment of others, and for something higher and better, you rise to the spiritual plane. If, in the moment of quarreling, in the moment of temptation to find fault with another, we will lose our self-centered self for the good of the Church of which we are members, for the good of the community, and especially for the progress of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will be blessed spiritually, and happiness will be our reward.

"What though I conquer my enemies,
And lay up store and pelf!
I am a conqueror poor indeed
Till I subdue myself."

(Unknown)

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God"

". . . seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.) Seeking first the kingdom

of God, making him the center of our life, is an essential and fundamental part of religion; indeed, you cannot imagine religion without it. Faith in God as a supreme being is the fundamental principle of religion.

When God becomes the center of our being, we become conscious of a new aim in life—spiritual attainment. Physical possessions are no longer the chief goal in life. To indulge, nourish, and delight the body as any animal may do is no longer the chief end of mortal existence. God is *not* viewed from the standpoint of what we may get from him, but rather from what we may *give* him.

Only in the complete surrender of our inner life may we rise above the selfish, sordid pull of nature. What the spirit is to the body, God is to the spirit. When the spirit leaves the body, it is lifeless, and when we eliminate God from our lives, spirituality languishes.

We accept God as indeed our Father. Christ taught us to address him as "Our Father which art in heaven." (Matt. 6:9.) To us he is so real that we accept his appearance in this dispensation as an expression of his love for his children. God is not merely a force, though he is that. He is not merely something away out of our touch, but he is as near as your father is to you and my father to me. I like to think when I have a task to perform that in secret I can say, "Father, guide me today," and feel that I shall have added strength to do that task. I may not succeed always. My own inhibitions and weaknesses may prevent my doing so, but there is strength in the assurance that I can go to him and ask him for help and guidance. That is what you can do.

Christ declared: ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10.) In him we have our life, our guide. His name is the only one whereby mankind will find peace, safety, comfort, and salvation. He who would have the abundant life must follow him.

As we depart now to go to our various homes, let us make real the good feelings that have been aroused

in our souls throughout this conference. Let us not permit to evaporate from our minds and feelings the good resolutions we have formed. First, let us resolve that from now on we are going to be men and women of higher and more sterling character, more conscious of our weaknesses, more kind and charitable toward the failings of others. Let us resolve that we shall practice more self-control in our homes; that we shall control our tempers, our feelings, and our tongues that they may not wander beyond the bounds of right and purity; that we shall do more seeking to develop the spiritual side of our lives, and realize how dependent we are upon God for success in this life, and particularly for success in the positions we hold in the Church.

With the prevalence in the world, and around about us, of pernicious ideas and subversive teachings that pervert the minds of the unstable and uninformed, and, as has been noted in the meetings of this conference, divert some of our young people from Church standards, may parents, stake presidencies, bishoprics, quorums of the priesthood, and auxiliary leaders realize that they have a greater responsibility than ever before to do all they can to counteract these poisonous influences.

Let us testify to the youth that God is our Father; that the spirit within us is just as eternal as he. This body is physical. It is a mere house, just as physical as this building, which, if left alone, is lifeless, no matter how beautiful or how substantial, and will not fill its purpose if left unoccupied.

Live as the offspring of Deity

Our body will not fulfill its purpose—it cannot—without that life-giving something within which is the offspring of Deity as eternal as the Father. When death comes, his power ends with the silencing of the physical heart. He does not, he cannot touch that eternal part of man any more than he touched Christ's spirit while his body lay in a borrowed tomb. He *himself* lived and moved and had his being. It is also true that death cannot touch that spirit within us. That spirit within, young man, young woman, is the *real* you. What you make of your-

self depends upon you as an individual. You are in this world to choose the right or the wrong, to accept the right or yield to temptation. Upon that choice will depend the development of the spiritual part of you. That is fundamental in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

May parents especially realize that the most potent influence in child life is the home, and that the Lord has directly placed the responsibility of teaching their children upon the parents. I wish the following paragraph, given by revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, could be written and put upon the wall of every home in the Church:

“. . . inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.” (D&C 68:25.)

Home for child training

The character of a child is formed largely during the first twelve years of his life. He spends 16 times as many waking hours in the home as in the school, and 126 times as many hours in the home as in the church. Each child is, to a great degree, what he is because of the ever-constant influence of home environment and the careful or neglectful training of parents. Home is the best place for the child to learn self-control, to learn that he must submerge himself for the good of another. It is the best place in which to develop obedience, which nature and society will later demand.

Homes are more permanent through love. Oh, then, let love abound! Though you fall short in some material matters, study and work and pray to hold your children's love. Establish and maintain your family hours always. Stay close to your children.

Pray, play, work, and worship together. This is the counsel of the Church. Would you have a strong and virile nation?—then keep your homes pure. Would you reduce delinquency and crime?—*then lessen the number of broken homes.* It is time that civilized peoples realized that the home largely determines whether children shall be of high or low character. Home-building, therefore, should be the paramount purpose of parents and of the nation.

With all my heart I say, God bless you, brethren and sisters, you parents, you men of the priesthood, you leaders of our stakes, wards, and missions, you temple presidents, you missionaries. God bless and protect the valiant young men who are in the armed forces of our country.

I pray that the spirit of this great conference will remain in all our hearts and be felt throughout the uttermost parts of the earth, wherever there is a mission or a branch in all the world; that that spirit might be a unifying power in increasing the testimony of the divinity of this work; that it may grow in its influence for good in the establishment of peace and brotherhood throughout the world.

I bear you my testimony that the head of this Church is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I know of the reality of his existence; of his willingness to guide and direct all who serve him. I know that in this dispensation he restored with his Father through the Prophet Joseph Smith the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness.

May we have increased power to be true to the responsibilities that the Lord has placed upon us as General Authorities, and upon you, my brethren and sisters, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Singing: “Still, Still with Thee” and “Now the Day Is Over.”

Closing Prayer: President Paul Wendell Ahlstrom, Idaho Falls Stake.

Conference adjourned for six months.
