

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Crossing the Bar," following which there will be a brief organ interlude, and then Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

Selection by the Choir, "Crossing The Bar," followed by a brief Organ interlude.

The Choir sang "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee."

Elder Mark E. Petersen

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

America is in travail. Never since the Civil War have law and order been so gravely challenged in this great land.

And the challenge is many-sided.

Many evils threaten our civilization with collapse

The majority of Americans, who are law-abiding and who desire to live in peace and harmony with their neighbors, have been shocked and dismayed by the rioting, the anarchy, the arson, and the pillaging in our cities and smaller communities.

Life and limb among the innocent have been imperiled. The protection of property has been disregarded. Even sacred things have been desecrated. This condition has nearly reached the point of insurrection, and its causes still persist.

As we have been told repeatedly by enforcement agencies, lawlessness in the form of almost every kind of crime is growing at an unbelievable rate. Irresponsibility is multiplying under an erosion of character and integrity.

Public confidence in political administration has been shaken by repeated examples of malfeasance in office. And yet, without stability in administration, government itself becomes insecure and well-being of the citizenry is threatened.

Immorality is another evidence of our backsliding, as is drunkenness; and the diseases that accompany immorality now appear in epidemic proportions. This immorality feeds upon pornography in films, on the printed page, even in advertising material that goes through our postal system, in violation of the law. Women's styles approach the obscene.

People are losing respect both for the laws and for those who make and attempt to enforce them. It has become popular to be a violator. Some courts of justice seem to have forgotten the purpose of their own existence.

All of these forces—and more—combine to threaten the solidarity of our homes and families, which always must be the basic units of society.

These forces promote infidelity. They nurture discord between husband and wife. They become a source of conflict between parents and children. They encourage immorality in the rising generation.

Some parents set an example of serious delinquency to their own offspring, and excuse—if not encourage—their repeated delinquencies.

It is true that most people are good people, and for this we are thankful. But it is also true that the evil influences all about us are taking a toll beyond anything we can afford. Our best homes are being invaded by evil influences. Every family is threatened.

We have reached a point where decency at last must make a stand against indecency and corruption. We can no longer permit avaricious peddlers of filth to corrupt our loved ones, nor allow gangs to make our peaceful neighborhoods unsafe.

The attack must be repulsed

Our cities and towns, our rural areas and our villages should never become battlefields, nor our streets unsafe for pedestrians traversing them after dark.

We can no longer stand by as criminals carry on their nefarious work. We can no longer permit the deliberate weakening of the arm of the law,

which originally was intended to protect the innocent. We must no longer coddle and protect the predators who sap the vitality of our democracy. We can no longer stand for the corroding infiltration of filthiness into our homes and communities.

Righteousness must survive

The Almighty gave freedom to America based upon obedience to the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. Our freedom will continue only as our righteousness survives.

Our righteousness can exist only as we obey the source of all righteousness, who is Jesus Christ.

Every force now corrupting America is a form of anti-Christ. Criminality is anti-Christ. Immorality is anti-Christ. Drunkenness is anti-Christ. Rioting, pillaging, and anarchy likewise are anti-Christ. Robbery, assault, and murder are all anti-Christ. Deception, duplicity, perjury, and covetousness are anti-Christ.

The distribution of pornographic material that corrupts the morals of young and old alike is anti-Christ. And so is every other force destructive of the high principles that have made America great.

I ask you—how *Christian* is America?

How deep is your own Christian faith?

Would you fight for it?

Do you believe enough in Christian teachings to take a stand for cleanliness and high morals—for honesty and integrity?

Disciplines of the Christ-like life will save our civilization

The abandonment of Christian principles has brought this nation to its present unfortunate plight. Only a return to Christ can correct our condition. Politics cannot do it. Higher taxes will not do it. New laws cannot do it. We have tried all these and they have failed.

We have tried every other man-made device, with only a worsening of the condition. It is time now to try God's way.

The irreligious need not scoff at

such a suggestion. Which among them can show how their godless philosophy has offered any remedy for our situation? What have they gained by turning their backs upon Christ?

Rejection of God-like principles has caused us to reap the whirlwind in riots, criminality, drunkenness, immorality, broken homes, and a rebellious new generation.

Since the irreligious have nothing to offer, we challenge them to study and apply true Christian principles. We appeal to men in government and business alike to discover the strength to be found in the gospel of Christ and to apply its sacred principles in their relationships with other people.

We urge the poor, even the hungry, to believe in Christ and to pray God to soften the hearts of others and thereby obtain the help they need, rather than to resort to violence.

All mankind should remember that hate begets hate, violence begets violence, and that love and understanding—cooperation and brotherhood—will reproduce themselves in the hearts of others when given willingly and sincerely.

We appeal to all mankind to practice the Golden Rule and to honestly and sincerely do to others as they would be done by.

We plead with everyone to love his neighbor as himself and to reconcile all differences by an application of the teachings of Christ.

Christianity *works* when it is *applied*. It is the one and only solution to our personal and national ills.

Christ is the Prince of Peace. By truly serving him, every wrong can be adjusted. Bitterness and hatred can fade away. Wars can end. There would be no further cause for riots. Looting would be a thing of the past. Communism would pass away.

Neighbors truly would respect each other and enjoy a friendly existence. Delinquency would end. There would be no more drunkenness nor the ills that follow it. Gangs would disappear. Character would be strong again. Cleanliness would prevail over filth. We could have a virtual heaven on earth.

Do you believe Christ can do all this for you? If you do not so believe, are you sure you are a Christian?

Christianity is not something to be used as a mere intellectual exercise. It is a way of life, and if applied it will solve all of our problems.

His power works among men

Are you doubtful about the power of Christ, or do you wonder if he really lives? We testify to you that he does live. And how do we know? We Latter-day Saints know that Christ lives because our modern prophets have seen him and have come to know him personally.

Jesus Christ has appeared in our day—here in the United States of America—and has appointed a modern ministry. He has revealed that our American form of government was given by inspiration, that he raised up the founding fathers of our country and by divine power set our ship of state upon its way. And he has said that if we will but obey him, he will preserve both us and our liberty.

He can and will bring peace to America if we will return to him.

But no mere lip service will do. He requires the hearts of men. If America now will turn to him in humble obedience, the light of heaven will shine again upon our land; our stains will be washed away; and man to man will brothers be, and peace will come to every heart.

Principles of righteousness will save and preserve us a nation

The founding fathers of our country understood this fact and warned that our nation never can survive if, in the words of Washington, it "disregards the rules of order and right which heaven itself has ordained."

One of our greatest statesmen, Daniel Webster, echoed this thought in 1852 as he addressed the New York Historical Society and said:

"If we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion—

"If we and they shall live always in the fear of God and shall respect his commandments—

"If we and they shall maintain just moral sentiments and such conscientious convictions of duty as shall control the heart and life—

"We may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country, and we may be sure of one thing: Our country will go on prospering.

"But—if we and our posterity reject religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no one can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us, that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity."

A former president of the American Bankers Association, Walter W. Head, once said:

"Unless we recognize the fundamental values of the church, and through the church seek a closer relationship with the divine, social justice cannot be achieved, political leadership will not accomplish its desired purpose, and economic leadership will fail in its effort to establish a full measure of prosperity.

"The application of the principles enunciated by the church is necessary to the perpetuity of our republic," concluded Mr. Head.

Repentance of national, social and personal sins is the sure way of escape from threatened destruction

Oh, America—wake up to the peril that confronts you. Arouse yourself from this delirium in which you find yourself. Realize that this Christian nation can never survive on the principles of anti-Christ.

As Lincoln said, we can live on only if we humble ourselves before the offended powers of heaven, "confess our national sins, pray for clemency and forgiveness," and stop giving mere lip service to the Almighty.

And then, blessed with victory and peace, this heaven-rescued land can justly

"Praise the Power that hath made
And preserved us a nation! . . .

Then conquer we must,
When our cause it is just
And this be our motto;