

in their spirit state. The future, Act 3, will later involve the cast in their immortal state. I must call it the *post-immortal* or *immortal act*.

In these several acts God's grandiose drama courses on and on and on, everlastingly, eternally.

Life is eternal. Faithful members of the cast, after their resurrection, may attain a state of exaltation in God's kingdom in a glory called *celestial*. That glory holds a promise of *eternal life*, the power of eternal increase, a continuation of the seeds.

"Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;

Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul."

(Longfellow, "A Psalm of Life.")

God, the great Author, lives. He is in his heaven dispatching his spirit children to this mortal stage. Jesus Christ is the director, the very Son of God. Joseph Smith was a prophet. He played an important role in the great drama, "Eternal Life." David O. McKay is another prophet, our prophet, in another important role in that great drama. To this I bear my humble witness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Our Eternal Father, we ask thy blessing "upon the priesthood, all in authority in thy Church and kingdom, that they might enjoy the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to qualify them in the discharge of every duty."

This prayer was voiced by President Brigham Young a century ago as he stood at the pulpit of this great tabernacle and offered the invocation on the first conference of the Church ever convened here. The day was October 6, 1867. A hundred years later his plea to the Lord is as timely as it was on the day it was offered.

We need the Holy Spirit in our many administrative responsibilities. We need it as we teach the gospel in our classes and to the world. We need it in the governing of our families.

As we direct and teach under the influence of that spirit, we shall bring spirituality into the lives of those for whom we are responsible.

World-wide scope of the Church:

With the tremendous growth of the Church we become increasingly aware of the great magnitude of the affairs of this the Lord's kingdom. We have a comprehensive program for the instruction of the family. We have organizations for youth, for children, for mothers and fathers. We have a vast missionary system, a tremendous wel-

fare operation, probably the most extensive genealogical program in the world. We must build houses of worship, hundreds and thousands of them. We must operate hospitals, schools, seminaries, institutes. The ramifications of our activities now reach around the world. All of this is the business of the Church. Sometimes the tendency is to handle it as we would ordinary business. But it is more than an organization of enterprises. It is more than a social body. These are but means to the accomplishment of its one true purpose.

That purpose is to assist our Father in heaven in bringing to pass his work and his glory, the immortality and eternal life of man. (See Moses 1:39.)

The forces against which we labor are tremendous. We need more than our own strength to cope with them.

To all who hold positions of leadership, to the vast corps of teachers and missionaries, to heads of families, I should like to make a plea: In all you do, feed the spirit—nourish the soul. ". . . the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. 3:6.)

To cope with "famine in the land"

I am satisfied that the world is starved for spiritual food. Amos prophesied of old: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will

send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

"In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst." (Amos 8:11-13.)

There is hunger in the land, and a genuine thirst—a great hunger for the word of the Lord and an unsatisfied thirst for things of the spirit. Ours is the obligation and the opportunity to nourish the soul.

Seek guidance of the Holy Ghost

First, to administrators, the leadership of the Church, you who structure and conduct the many and varied meetings—and I include myself—I make a plea that we constantly seek the inspiration of the Lord and the companionship of his Holy Spirit to bless us in keeping our efforts on a high spiritual plane. Those prayers will not go unanswered, for the promise has been given through revelation that "God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost. . . ." (D&C 121:26.)

Concerning the conduct of our meetings, the Lord has said that "the elders are to conduct the meetings as they are led by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God." (D&C 20:45.) And again: ". . . it always has been given to the elders of my church from the beginning, and ever shall be, to conduct all meetings as they are directed and guided by the Holy Spirit." (D&C 46:2.)

And now listen to a statement made long ago. Concerning those who had come into the Church, Moroni wrote:

". . . after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, [Why?] that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to

keep them continually watchful unto prayer. . . ." (Moro. 6:4.)

Brethren, in the conduct of all our meetings let us see that we "feed the flock of God," with that bread which perisheth not.

Teach with the spirit

Next, a word to those who teach the gospel, including the missionaries. To each of you I should like to pose a question given by the Lord himself. "Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were you ordained?"

He then answers it: "To preach my gospel by the Spirit. . . ."

And then he goes on to tell of the remarkable thing that happens when we preach by the Spirit: "Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together." (D&C 50:13-14, 22.)

Is not this the objective of all our effort, that both we who teach and we who are taught understand one another and are edified and rejoice together?

Story of a military chaplain

There sits with us in this conference a man in military uniform, an officer of the United States Army. He returned only two weeks ago from South Vietnam. He is one of our LDS chaplains, a man of great faith and great devotion and, I may add, a man of great courage. For a year or more he has been in the central highlands of that sad, embattled nation. He has been where the fighting has been bitter and the losses as tragic as in any area of Vietnam. On two occasions he has been wounded. He has seen a tragically large percentage of his brigade become casualties, many of them killed in action while he has been in the field at their side. The men of his unit have loved and respected him. His superior officers have honored him. To look at him you would never think of him as an extraordinary man. He is rather small of stature, light of frame. He has been a good student, but he has not been a great scholar. He has not been trained as a minister of religion, but as

I have observed him in conversations in Vietnam, in Japan, and here at home, I have felt of his great spirit. I have heard his quiet testimony.

He was not always a member of this Church. As a boy in the South he grew up in a religious home where the Bible was read and where the family attended the little church of the community. He desired the gift of the Holy Ghost of which he had read in the scriptures but was told that it was not available. The desire never left him. He grew to manhood. He served in the army at home and abroad. He searched but never found the thing he most wanted. Between military enlistments, he became a prison guard. While sitting in the gun tower of a California prison, he meditated on his own deficiencies and prayed to the Lord that he might receive the Holy Ghost and satisfy the hunger which he felt in his soul. That hunger had not been satisfied with sermons to which he had listened.

One day two young men knocked at his door. His wife invited them to return when her husband would be at home. These two young men taught that family by the Holy Spirit. In two and a half weeks they were baptized. I have heard this man testify to the effect that as he was taught by the power of the Holy Spirit, he was edified and rejoiced with those who taught him. Out of that marvelous beginning, with the gift of the Holy Ghost, has come a shedding forth of light and truth that has given peace to the dying, comfort to the bereaved, blessings to the wounded, courage to the timid, and faith to those who had scoffed. Sweet are the fruits of teaching done under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They feed the spirit and nourish the soul.

The Holy Spirit for parents

Finally, a word to parents, and particularly to fathers who stand as heads of families: We need the direction of the Holy Ghost in the delicate and tremendous task that is ours in strengthening the spirituality of our homes.

Oh, the countless tragedies that are found across the land, tragedies whose

roots find their bitter nourishment in contentious homes.

My phone rang one afternoon. The young man on the other end of the line said frantically that he needed to see me. I told him that I was involved with appointments for the remainder of the day and asked if he could come tomorrow. He stated that he had to see me at once. I told him to come and asked my secretary to change the other appointments. In a few minutes he walked in, a boy with a hunted and haunted look. His hair was long, his appearance miserable. I invited him to sit and to talk openly and frankly. I assured him of my interest in his problem and of my desire to help him.

He unraveled a story distressing and miserable. He was in serious trouble. He had broken the law, he had been unclean, he had blighted his life. Now in his extremity there had come a realization of the terrible plight in which he found himself. He needed help beyond his own strength, and he pleaded for it. I asked him if his father knew of his difficulties. He replied by saying that he could not talk with his father, that his father hated him.

I happened to know his father, and I know that his father did not hate him. He loved him and mourned and grieved for him, but that father had an uncontrolled temper. Whenever he disciplined his children, he lost control and destroyed both them and himself.

As I looked across the desk at that trembling, broken young man, estranged from a father he considered his enemy, I thought of some great words of revealed truth given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. They set forth in essence the governing spirit of the priesthood, and I believe they apply to the government of our homes.

Power available through "love unfeigned"

Let me read them to you.

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained . . . , only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge,

which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile—”

I believe those marvelous and simple words set forth the spirit in which we should stand as fathers. Do they mean that we should not exercise discipline, that we should not reprove? Listen to these further words:

“Reproving betimes with sharpness [When? While angry or in a fit of temper? No—] when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprovéd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

“That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.” (D&C 121:41-44.)

The Holy Spirit, key to government in the home

This, my brethren of the priesthood who stand at the head of families, is the key to government in the home directed by the Holy Spirit. I commend those words to every man within the sound of my voice and do not hesitate to promise that if you will govern your families in the spirit of those words, which have come from the Lord, you will have cause to rejoice, as will those for whom you are responsible.

I caught a glimpse of that kind of family life the other day in the Salt Lake Temple.

The father was a handsome young man, an air force officer, a jet fighter pilot. The mother was a beautiful young woman. With them were three lovely children.

They had joined the Church in the South a little over a year ago. They had put into their lives the program of the Church. They had experienced a joy they had never previously known. Now he had been ordered to Vietnam on an assignment fraught with peril. They all sensed the terrifying odds against his coming back alive and whole.

It was a picture almost celestial in that quiet, sacred room of the Lord's house. There in the authority of the Holy Priesthood they were sealed together as a family with a bond and covenant that time could not break and death could not destroy.

At the conclusion of that holy ordinance the father took his beloved companion in his arms, and together they held their beautiful children.

“You are ours, and we are yours, forever”

With emotions incident to the expected separation that would divide them in a few hours when he left for Asia, but with a faith that shone through her tears, the wife looked up into his eyes and softly said words to this effect: “Come what may now, dear, you are ours and we are yours, forever.”

Somehow heaven seemed very near that morning.

It is the spiritual sinews of the gospel that become the fiber of our faith. God help us to cultivate them in every activity in the Church and in every association in our homes.

I return to President Young's prayer from this stand a century ago: Our Eternal Father, we ask thy blessing “upon the priesthood, all in authority in thy Church and kingdom, that they might enjoy the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to qualify them in the discharge of every duty,” in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Joseph Fielding Smith

Brethren, it is a pleasure to look into the faces of so many who hold the priesthood. This evening at 7 o'clock, the general meeting of the priesthood of the Church will be held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. Priesthood members only are invited to be present. This priesthood session will not be broadcast publicly.

In addition to the overflow meeting in the Assembly Hall, the proceedings of the priesthood meeting this evening will be relayed by closed-circuit broadcast, originating in the Tabernacle, to members for the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood assembled in approximately 475 separate locations in all parts of the United States and Canada, and by way of closed-circuit television in eight buildings in Salt Lake City. It is estimated that approximately ten thousand holders of the priesthood will be on Temple Square, and ninety-five

thousand others will gather in the other locations from coast to coast and in Canada.

The Sunday morning session will be broadcast by many radio and television stations in the west; and short-waved in English over Station WNYW to Europe, South America, Central America, Africa, and parts of Asia.

Again, 20 radio stations will broadcast the translated conference sessions of Sunday morning in major cities of Mexico and Central America, together with Spanish programming stations in this country, to a potential Latin American audience of three million people.

This morning's and tomorrow morning's sessions will be carried by direct wire from the Tabernacle over oceanic cables to a large number of saints assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, Austria, and Denmark.

The CBS Radio Network Tabernacle Choir broadcast tomorrow morning will be from 9:35 to 10:00 o'clock. Those desiring to attend this broadcast must be in their seats no later than 9:15 a.m.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the Ricks College Com-

bined Choirs, with Chester W. Hill and Inga Johnson conducting, and Robert Cundick at the organ.

I am sure this great gathering in the Tabernacle and our radio and television audiences would wish me to express for them our heartfelt appreciation for the excellent singing of this group of Ricks College students. We thank them, their conductors, Brother Hill and Sister Johnson, and Brother Cundick, who has been at the organ.

The Chorus will now favor us with, "Achieved Is the Glorious Work," conducted by Sister Johnson, after which we will have the benediction, which will be offered by Elder Wilford J. Dredge, President of the Idaho Stake, after which this conference will be adjourned until seven o'clock this evening.

The Chorus sang "Achieved Is This Glorious Work."

The closing prayer was offered by President Wilford J. Dredge, President of the Idaho Stake.

Conference adjourned until 7:00 p.m.

GENERAL PRIESTHOOD MEETING

FIFTH SESSION

The General Priesthood meeting of the Church convened at 7:00 p.m., Saturday, September 30, with President N. Eldon Tanner, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducting.

The Men of the Tabernacle Choir furnished the singing for this session, with Richard P. Condie conducting. Robert Cundick was at the organ.

President Tanner made the following introductory remarks:

President N. Eldon Tanner

This is the General Priesthood session of the 137th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President McKay had hoped to be with us tonight, but his doctors have urged that he not attempt to be here. He sends his love and greetings to all the priesthood members assembled in the various buildings throughout the Church; and he does have a message for all of us, which will be given later.

It may be of interest to you to know that these services are being relayed by closed-circuit wire to members of the priesthood gathered in the Assembly Hall and in approximately 475 other separate locations from coast to coast, and in Canada. It is estimated that approximately 95,000 will participate in this meeting by direct wire. This does not include the 10,000 gathered in this building and in the Assembly Hall.