

## Elder Bernard P. Brockbank

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

Brothers and sisters: Just prior to the ascension of the Lord, he gave counsel to teach them "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20.) That includes the counsel and the teaching that we should give today.

It is rather interesting how the theme of this session follows in line with many of the thoughts that I have to give. There will be some repetition of scriptures. They are good and they bear repetition.

### In the image of God

One of the most valuable passages of scripture is found in the very first chapter of the Old Testament: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:26-27.) This scripture is well-known by many, when you take the world as a whole.

To know that we were created in the image and likeness of God is important knowledge and a great blessing, and it is a challenge to know and to do the will of the Creator. I find that many of the Lord's children never learn the important truth that they are created in the image and likeness of God.

When God created man, he created a holy temple, his masterpiece.

### The temple of God

The apostle Paul 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.) The holy body is sacred.

Jesus said of man, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is

in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.)

It is also a challenge to master one's self, to choose right over wrong, to choose first the kingdom of God and his righteousness over evil. When we choose right over wrong, we have made the perfect choice. Choosing God's righteousness is a commandment that is possible to live. But sometimes we knowingly choose wrong over right.

### "This is life eternal"

Jesus said relative to the purpose of this life: ". . . this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) This is a great goal given by the Master himself: to know the Creator and to know God.

Knowing this passage of divine truth does not eliminate the dedication and effort required to obtain the knowledge to know the Father and the Son. The Savior was sent to this earth to teach his plan and to set an example for all others to follow, as has been mentioned. He said, ". . . I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6.) There is no other way. Only through our mediator Jesus Christ and his gospel plan can anyone know God and return to the kingdom of heaven.

### Beware false doctrine

We have been warned to avoid false doctrines and man-made philosophy. The apostle Paul said, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8.) Our lives should be patterned after the Messiah's.

Because we are in the image and likeness of God, we can sometimes become self-sufficient and foolishly follow our own ways or the ways of men and the ways of this world.

The Lord said, and I quote from the great prophet Isaiah, "For my thoughts

are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8-9.)

God did not receive his ways and his thoughts, his gospel plan of salvation and eternal life from man. The gospel plan was created before the foundations of this world were laid. But man may by obedience receive from God his thoughts and his ways and his plan of life.

### "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God"

Jesus gave another key to perfection when he said, ". . . seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. . . ." (Matt. 6:33.)

There is another type of righteousness on this earth, and the Lord spoke of it when he spoke to the Pharisees, ". . . except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20.)

We have been counseled by Jesus Christ and his apostles not to accept false doctrines of men and false ways of men that have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. False doctrines create darkness in the human mind and in this life, but the Lord's doctrines and ways create light and eternal hope and eternal life.

The apostle John said, ". . . God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (John 1:5-7.)

### Walk in light and truth

There is no greater blessing that can come to man than to walk in the way and in the light and truth of Jesus Christ.

In contrast, when anyone creates his own light for this life, he stumbles and

finds voids of despair and darkness and depression.

The following statement by Jesus has great purpose and meaning: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12.)

This is a promise from the Lord himself that if we follow him, we shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life. This light is more profound and of greater power on the human soul than the brilliant rays of the noonday sun. One can feel this light in the mind and in the divine nature, the very essence of life. One can also see this light in the character and countenance of all those who walk and act and serve in the light of the Savior.

All that have the light and truth of Jesus Christ have been asked to "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16.) The light should be turned on with full glory, with full radiance, with happiness, and with a countenance of glory.

The Lord has promised us great blessings if we will be obedient to his laws and commandments and radiate and teach to others the light of eternal life. In the Lord's plan, the gospel plan of salvation must be taught by his mortal children.

### Obedience is evidence of love

To know the Lord is to love the Lord. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21.) A great promise by the Lord himself.

"I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.) When we follow the counsel and doctrines of men, we are only entitled to the rewards and blessings of men.

The Lord has promised that if we will humble ourselves in his sight, he

will lift us up. ". . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32.)

The light and truth that come from obedience to the will of God bring eternal happiness and eternal glory.

President McKay said, "Happiness is the end and design of life. Happiness is a state of the spirit and an attitude of the mind. . . . Man's success or failure, happiness or misery, depends upon what he seeks and what he chooses." (*Secrets of a Happy Life*, p. 171.)

### The abundant life

The full and abundant life is built around true happiness. True happiness comes from the light of divine righteousness built into the character of those who follow Jesus Christ. Joy and happiness come from God, and unhappiness comes from Satan. Satan and his legions are at work on this earth.

### Causes of unhappiness

The world today is full of unhappiness. The apostle Paul gives a few of the causes of unhappiness and misery, and each is inspired by Satan. We must avoid the evils and pitfalls of the flesh. Paul mentioned several of the great evils of the flesh. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these. Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

"Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

"Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, . . . they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21.)

There is no entrance into the kingdom of God for those who are accountable, unless they use the principles of repentance. Repentance is God's law to purify the human soul to greater self-control and to perfection. Growth in God's righteousness comes from the principle of repentance and must be used for eternal progression.

### Repentance—escape from evil

Jesus started his ministry saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2.) Every living soul needs to master the use of the principle of repentance.

We live in the dispensation of the fullness of times; we have been counseled and warned by all the prophets, apostles, and the Savior himself of the evils and the conspiring of men in the last days and that even Satan himself will be transformed to appear as an angel of light to deceive those who fail to follow Jesus Christ.

Here is a great warning by the apostle Paul: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

"Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." (2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

### Fulfillment of prophecy sign of the times

We see today these prophecies and many others being fulfilled.

We have been counseled and we must be careful in this life not to love pleasure and the creations of this world more than God. Because of the greed and interests in this great mortal life and world, we have been given the greatest and most important of all laws and commandments. The first great commandment (and it has been mentioned here many times) was given by the Savior himself. ". . . thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." (Mark 12:30.)

It requires desire, effort, and genuine love and practice to live this first commandment.

When one keeps and lives this commandment, he finds little love left for Satan and for the uninspired philosophies of men.

When this commandment is built into one's life and character, he feels and finds eternal purpose and a desire to return after death and the resurrection to the kingdom of heaven and to be with God the Eternal Father and with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Brethren and sisters, may love for our Heavenly Father and our Savior be strengthened in our own hearts and in the minds and hearts of those whom

we serve, and our neighbors, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Hugh B. Brown

We have just listened to Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve. We all admire very much his remarkable control of his emotions. We want him to know that he has our love and our blessings in his bereavement.

We shall now hear from Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve.

### Elder Franklin D. Richards

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

President McKay, my dear brothers and sisters and friends, I am grateful to be with you. I have been inspired by the words of our beloved Prophet as well as my brethren. The beautiful music and prayers have likewise contributed to the wonderful spirit that has attended each session of this conference. Truly the Spirit of the Lord has been with us.

### Preparation for the coming of the Lord

In a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed that "the keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth." (D&C 65:2.) "Wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come. . . ." (D&C 65:6.)

Our mission is here defined as being worldwide in preparation of the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and in fulfilling our mission, the Church is fast becoming a worldwide organization.

In 1947, as the saints were celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the entrance of the Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley,

President George Albert Smith addressed a communication to the members of the Church entitled "Looking Ahead—Into a New Century of Growth and Development." In this article he stated:

"I assure every man and woman of the Church that you have a great obligation to spread the word of the Lord abroad and to carry the truth to every land and clime so that the power of the Priesthood will be made manifest among our Father's children in many places where it has never yet even been heard of.

"You men of the Church have this responsibility and as one of your number, I would like to say that we cannot let our own personal affairs stand in the way. . . .

"That is the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Great is the joy that comes into the hearts of the men and women, who devote themselves to doing what our Heavenly Father desires of them, and great will be their happiness as they participate in the new era of growth and development that lies ahead for the Church as we look forward into a new century of progress." ("Church News," December 20, 1947. Italics added.)

We are now 20 years into this new era of growth and development, and growth and development mean change. We must not resist change, as we