

his children, worthy of love, and we have in us the capacity to love. We must learn to love even as we are loved by him.

Let me conclude with this prayer and earnest hope: God help us, and help us to help younger generations, to make the choices that will qualify us as worthwhile people, to make real the best that lies within us, to live up to our moral capacity, and to accomplish what is humanly possible, through believing, belonging, serving, and loving, even as the Son of God has taught us. God help us to be able to answer in good conscience when he asks: "Where art thou?"

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Tabernacle Choir sang, "Lovely Appear."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to

us. He was followed by the singing, "Lovely Appear."

We shall now have a brief interlude with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "Father Omnipotent." The congregation and Choir will then join in singing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

The Tabernacle Choir sang the anthem, "Father Omnipotent."

The Choir and the congregation then joined in singing the hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

President N. Eldon Tanner

We wish to welcome the television and radio audiences who have just joined us, and again we announce that we are gathered in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the third session of the One Hundred Thirty-eighth Annual Conference of the Church.

Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

Elder Mark E. Petersen

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I would like to talk with you today about the United States and its relationship to God.

Most people do not realize it, but this nation is different from all other nations. It has a divine destiny not shared by other countries, and was set up as an independent power by a deliberate act of God to fulfill that destiny.

America's divine destiny

Because our nation is a creation of heaven, and because it has a divine destiny, we Americans must learn that it can continue to exist only as it aligns itself with the powers of heaven. If we turn our back upon the Almighty, even by ignoring him, we jeopardize our national future. If we deliberately oppose his purposes, we place ourselves in danger of destruction.

These stern facts have been taught

to Americans from the beginning of our national history, starting with our first President, George Washington. He realized and he publicly announced that we obtained our independence through an act of Providence, since we were far too weak to gain it by ourselves. Knowing this, he warned that if we are to survive as a free and independent nation, we must obey the Almighty God who brought us into being.

Abraham Lincoln, another inspired President, said virtually the same thing, warning that if we fail to obey the commandments of God, we shall go down to ruin.

A crucial time

We have reached a point in our national history as crucial as the time of the Civil War. Our present dangers are quite as great. Threats to our

future seem even greater. And yet, as a people, we have failed to turn to the divine power that created us.

It is true that public surveys indicate an increase in church membership and attendance, but that is no measure of the depth of conversion necessary to bring the principles of Christ into our daily lives.

Because of our love of wealth and prestige and our insatiable passion for ease and pleasure, we fail to take the essential spiritual steps which could and would preserve us.

Everyone—every man on the street—knows that we cannot continue with present conditions as they are, and yet we seem not to have the desire or the courage to alter our course.

Need divine help

Whether we are willing to admit it or not, our one great need is to turn to God. Our human efforts have failed and seem almost to lead us into ever more difficult entanglements. We need more than human wisdom. We need divine help. We need to be saved from war and criminal elements, from anarchy and from riots. We need a shield against the devious schemes of enemies abroad. We need to be saved from corrosion within—from the ravages of immorality, dishonesty, drunkenness, broken homes, delinquent parents, and undisciplined children. We need protection from atheism, for it can destroy our way of life.

Do you doubt that atheism is a threat to America?

Threat of atheism

Atheism is the cause of most of our ills. If we were realistic about our present plight, we would admit that atheism in its many forms is our greatest enemy, whether it be in abandoning God for pleasure and money, or in yielding to philosophical meanderings, or in surrendering to those forces which break down family life, destroy free government, seduce the masses, and spawn hate and war.

Are we not intelligent enough to perceive that shocking fact?

Are we not sufficiently alert to see

our desperate need of an infinite power who can rescue us in this present hour?

Are we forever to be so obtuse that we confine God to a remote past and an uncertain hereafter?

Can we never learn that he is a God of the present day—of the here and now?

In the midst of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln said something that should frighten present-day Americans. He was very realistic when our country was being split asunder by the war between the states. He knew very well that the preservation of the nation could be achieved in only one way. It was not through our frowning battlements nor our bristling seacoasts, as he expressed it.

Lincoln said that if we as a people do not turn to God and serve him, our nation will drift into destruction. He expressed his meaning in these words: "If we do not do right, God will let us go our own way to ruin. If we do right, he will lead us safely out of this wilderness and crown our arms with victory." Thereupon he summoned America to turn to God as the only means of survival.

J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI, stated it this way: "What we need in America is a return to the God of our Fathers and a most vigorous defense against the minions of Godlessness and atheism."

Warning of wise men

Why do we not heed these warnings?

Similar counsel has been given by nearly every President of the United States in his time, and by economists, educators, jurists, and statesmen.

Let us consider a few of their warnings:

As we have indicated, George Washington said that this nation cannot endure apart from the God of heaven.

Woodrow Wilson said: "The sum of the whole matter is this: Our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the Spirit of Christ."

Calvin Coolidge said: "The strength

of our country is the strength of its religious convictions."

Franklin D. Roosevelt said: "No greater thing could come to our land than a revival of the spirit of religion—to stir the hearts of men and women of all faiths to a reassertion of their belief in God and their dedication to his will. I doubt if there is any problem—social, political, or economic—that would not melt away before the fire of such a spiritual reawakening."

President Eisenhower constantly reminded us of our spiritual obligation.

Roger W. Babson, great economist of his day, said: "In the last analysis, our national future depends upon whether it is spiritually or materially minded. Only the Golden Rule will save this country—not the rule of gold."

James Rowland Angell, former president of Yale University, said: "It is my considered conviction that there can be no enduring alleviation of the social and political ills which plague us unless and until there is an essential change in the ethical and spiritual attitude of the rank and file of men."

Editorial urges action

But as mentioned in an editorial in the *U. S. News and World Report*, "With so many champions of the doctrine, why are there so few ready to practice the preaching?"

"Large numbers of people faithfully follow their creeds, and yet in the grim business of everyday life, do we perceive a fundamental change? Do we see men on every side ready to surrender their enormous power or their possessions or even their pride, to the service of God?"

"A spiritual revival would waken America and purify her whole national life. It is not, however, to be attained by mere expression of purpose," the editorial continues.

"It requires action throughout our waking hours. Not until each and every one of us feels the impact of spiritual achievement, not until the eagerness to serve God is stronger than the eagerness to serve ourselves, not until we are ready to make sacrifices

of time and money and power and pride for the sake of others who need our help and our guidance will we begin to understand the elemental transformation which is prerequisite to the spiritual re-birth of the nation."

Means for survival

Our situation in America is not merely a case of fighting the encroachments of seditious influences. It is not only a matter of legislating against crime. Neither is it one of changing our Constitution because some misguided individuals think it is obsolete; nor is it a case of sending more men to the Orient to fight an enemy who has trapped us into a different kind of war.

We are confronted with the choice of whether or not we as a nation will return to God in spirit and in truth as a means of actual survival. We must choose whether we will become fully converted to him or not. To put it plainly, it is largely a case of obedience versus lip service.

The Almighty is a God of war as well as of peace. The Bible clearly teaches that. And he is a power to be dealt with in this present crisis. He can be our literal Savior here and now. He can protect and preserve our nation. He has done it in the past; he can do it again today. He can end the war in Vietnam and give us an honorable peace. He can save us from criminality and from all the other inhumanities which now impale us on a cross of suicidal selfishness.

God can solve problems

It is no imaginary ruin that faces our nation if we reject Jesus Christ, as Lincoln pointed out so dramatically. And it is possible that our greatness can be buried in profound obscurity if we refuse to turn to God, as Daniel Webster expressed it.

Already there is talk of a new civil war and of riots that will totally eclipse those of last summer. Insurrection is now on the lips of thousands of agitators. The basic concepts of our free government are being challenged. Overnight this nation could

be paralyzed through the devious efforts of some of our treacherous citizens. And if widespread insurrection comes, do you suppose for one moment that our enemies from without will sit idly by? All our efforts to save ourselves thus far have failed. But God can solve our problems—and he will do so if we turn to him in humility and faith. However, let us not suppose that a few feeble prayers will be sufficient to call down his aid. It will take more than halfhearted supplications to save us.

Obedience required

Prayer is powerful indeed when accompanied by works of righteousness, but prayer alone is but lip service. The Almighty spurns lip service. Empty words are but symptoms of hypocrisy to him. He is a God of action—a God of works as well as of faith. He demands obedience to him if we are to receive help from him. Are we ready to thus obey him? We cannot deal in half-way measures—not with God—and neither can we serve two masters.

I ask you: Is every one of us willing to do unto others as we would be done by? Are we willing to be merciful, kind, and pure in heart; to turn the other cheek; to go the extra mile? Is every one of us willing to be sufficiently Christlike to accept his precept that says: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God?" (Matt. 5:9.)

Our great need of repentance is clearly evident. The solution to our problem is not in violence nor in new legislation. Neither is it in training our police in the latest anti-riot methods. Our answer can be found only in obedience to Christ on the part of everybody.

Evil cannot bring good

Jesus said that an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. A crime-ridden society cannot bring forth a new generation of upright citizens, nor can a nation of drinkers produce sober offspring. Can people who condone immorality provide a chaste and successful beginning for babies born

illicitly in a new generation?

Can we escape the diseases so inseparably connected with immorality? Can people who knowingly undermine good character expect to reap anything but the whirlwind?

For every practical reason we must change our course and turn away from the selfishness and corruption now growing among us like a gigantic malignancy. For every practical reason we must turn to the Christ and live his teachings!

Put trust in God

Said Lincoln in his first inaugural address: "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a reliance on him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way, all our difficulties."

In ancient times an inspired prophet who lived in this western hemisphere said that God "doth not command us that we shall subject ourselves to our enemies, but that we should put our trust in him, and he will deliver us." (Al. 61:13.)

Serve the God of the land

Another ancient prophet spoke directly to modern America, foretelling the assistance God will give us if we serve him. Said he: ". . . this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. . . ." (Eth. 2:12.)

And that prophet also said, even as did Lincoln, that if we in America fail to serve Jesus Christ, we will face certain destruction. This is a divine warning, first from the prophet of old and then from the inspired President of Civil War days.

Oh, America, turn to God. But do not give him mere lip service. Obey him with all your hearts, might, mind, and strength.

Let us save ourselves from the present crisis in the only certain way, remembering that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

God." (Matt. 4:4.) And for this I earnestly pray in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "The Heavens Are Telling," with a trio consisting of Kay Welch, Wallace McCloy and Merrill Wilson, following which there will be a brief organ

interlude, and then Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will speak to us.

Selection by the Choir, "The Heavens Are Telling," followed by a brief organ interlude.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

In the world there are more than three and a half billion people. They are divided into groups, each under the domination of systems whereby they become subject to the supreme power of the land in which they live. In some countries this supreme power is vested in one person, the sovereign. Other countries have republican forms of government in which sovereignty resides in the people, and the supreme power is usually expressed by the legislative body. Regardless of whether sovereignty is administered by an individual or by the people, citizens become subject to that supreme power. They have the rights and privileges afforded them under the law, and they have the duty to comply with the provisions of the law. This is essential for the good of society, for the protection of life and liberty, and for the promotion and preservation of the happiness of man.

Law must be sustained

In a republic, the government has the sovereign right as well as the duty to protect the rights of the individual and to settle civil disputes or disorders by peaceful means. Citizens do not have the right to take the law into their own hands or exercise physical force. The sovereign laws of the state must be sustained, and persons living under those laws must obey them for the good of the whole. In this regard

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints takes a strong position. One of the fundamental tenets of its faith is clearly stated in these words: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law." (Article of Faith 12.)

Those in the world who have a belief in God live under the unusual circumstances of a dual sovereignty. In addition to being subject to the supreme power of the state, they have a fealty to God and a solemn duty to keep the commandments given by him. This idea of divine kingship and a sovereignty runs through all of the Old Testament and all of the New Testament.

The kingdom of God

In describing the commencement of the ministry of Jesus, Mark uses these words: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

"And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15.) Throughout his entire ministry, one of the main subjects of the teachings of the Master was "the kingdom of God is at hand." Some scholars interpret the words "is at hand" as describing something to take place in the near future. It is