

Friday, October 4

First Day

cause they loved the Lord couldn't get too far away for his influence to reach them. He is always there.

The wrong moorings

One of the philosophers has said: "The greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason." Of course, this isn't strictly true. Obviously it is greater treason to do the wrong thing for any reason. But the philosopher, is correct in assessing it treason to do the right thing for the wrong reason because it is an essential betrayal to the security of the soul. The man who performs righteous acts for an erroneous reason lulls himself into a false sense of security. He feels that the acts themselves will save him. But when the rain descends and the flood comes and the wind blows and beats on the house, it falls because it does not have the correct foundation.

The danger in this approach comes from the fact that all too often man ties himself to the wrong moorings. Wonderful as a mother's love is, it is not strong enough to hold her son. Even heaven is not a sufficiently strong anchor to hold against the flood tide of temptation. In the words of the Master: "What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled. . . ." (D&C 1:38.)

The strongest reason

From this and other scripture it is obvious that everything—the heavens, the earth, and everything that in them is—is going to pass away, and if you have tied your faith to any part of this frail existence—the earth, the heavens,

or people on the earth—it is not going to stand. Everything else will go except the word of the Lord, but "my word shall not pass away," saith the Lord.

Then love of the Lord becomes absolutely vital to salvation, because it forms the foundation of our motives for righteousness. No other reason is strong enough to hold us, and therefore is wrong.

It is manifestly impossible to love him whom we do not know. Then to know the Lord becomes the first step to correct action through correct motives. We declare with boldness and yet with humility that the God of this earth, who is Jesus Christ, does live. He has been seen in modern time and has given instruction and authority to establish his Church again upon the earth in all its fullness. I declare to you with soberness that this has been done through the Prophet Joseph Smith and all those who have succeeded him unto this day. I bear to you my witness that David O. McKay is a prophet of the living God—I know it as I know I am alive—and that he presides over this Church under the direction of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose Church it is; and we invite all men of goodwill who are honest in heart to partake of this truth and blessing with us. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr. has just addressed us.

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve, who will be our concluding speaker.

Elder John Longden

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

One of the privileges of being an elder citizen is to reminisce. He who has good memories is richly blessed. As I have contemplated my message today, there is one phrase that keeps returning: "The tie that binds." Many

poems and articles have been written about the tie that binds. I should like to suggest that the tie that really binds is the gospel of Jesus Christ; the way of life it offers mankind; the peace it assures to all who will

obey its teachings, the hope and promises for eternal happiness are just exactly what the world needs to bind up its war-weary, confused, tired body—the tie that binds.

Important anniversary

May I reminisce? This is an important anniversary today. It was 17 years ago on this very day that a prophet bestowed upon me the greatest honor that could come into the life of any man. Sitting across from me in his home on South Temple, taking my hands in his, he seemed to look clear through me as he said, "Brother Longden, we want you to be one of the Assistants to the Quorum of the Twelve."

How the blessings have been poured out upon us, not only since then, but all of our lives! The windows of heaven have truly been opened unto us.

The privilege of visiting in stakes, wards, branches, of visiting the sick, listening to those who seek counsel for their problems, performing marriages for time and eternity, setting apart missionaries, and the glorious experience of touring missions—all combine to bring rich memories.

Tour of South Pacific

Some years ago, I was assigned to tour the South Pacific missions, including Australia and New Zealand. Since then, because of jet transportation, the world has become smaller, but at that time a visitor from Church headquarters was not as regular a thing as it now is. Even so, in every country, there were many fine Saints who were living the gospel, who, because of their obedience to its principles, had improved themselves financially, socially, intellectually, morally, and most important, spiritually. Wherever we went, there was a bond of understanding, regardless of language, customs, or the color of skin.

Visit to Tonga

There is a brand new stake in the South Pacific, Nuku'alofa [Tonga] Stake, which I should like to congratulate and welcome into the fold of stakes. That Tongan stake now joins

her sister, Apia [Samoa] Stake, in two relatively remote places of the world. The first time in Tonga, we were on a very tight schedule, so that when we arrived at the beautiful assembly room at the Liahona College, where we were to hold our first meetings, the Saints were already assembled and waiting, all dressed in pure white. They had removed the benches and were sitting on the floor on home-woven mats—this to make more room. As I recall, there were over 1,200 assembled there. We were hurrying down the outside of the building to go in and saw them stand as one—1,200 as one—and immediately there were bell-like tones of gladness and joy ringing out, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." They were crying. We cried tears of joy, understanding tears. We joined in singing—we in English, they in Tongan—"We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." Immediately, through an interpreter, I explained I was not a prophet but knew they were singing to our Prophet David O. McKay, and I would take their message back to him as soon as I returned home.

The next day, we saw the handiwork of the sisters in Relief Society that was being assembled for their annual bazaar. This was Relief Society—not in Salt Lake City, not in California, Arizona, or New York, but Relief Society in Tonga, teaching the same lessons, carrying the same program. Under the MIA, there were athletic events, dance and music festivals participated in by Tongan folk. Returning to Tonga, while we were there, were 69 Saints who had been to the New Zealand Temple for their endowments—a tie that binds forever. I shall never forget the spirit of these great humble folk, many of whom sold their earthly possessions in order to gain eternal possessions—husbands and wives with children united as families for eternity.

The work in Perth, Australia

Our first visit to Perth, Australia, was at the Christmas season. Perth does not seem so far away today as it did when John Glenn orbited the earth in his space ship. It was Christmas Eve in Perth when, with the mission president, we went to the railroad station

Friday, October 4

First Day

to bid good-bye to some Saints who were leaving to go to the New Zealand Temple to receive the same blessings the Tongan Saints had sacrificed to receive. We, who sometimes make so much of Christmas in a financial way, were brought up a little short when we asked the parents of five little children, "What about Father Christmas?" (The children were young enough to expect a visit from Father Christmas.) The young mother bent down and picked up a small package and said, "It is enough. Think of the blessings we will have when we get to the temple."

Later that night, after meeting with the missionaries, seven M Men and Gleaners caroled for us at the chapel. It was comforting to know that wherever we went in the world, we could have had the same experience.

Then there were two branches in Perth. Today, Perth is another of our brand new stakes.

Other mission experiences

Another experience: How many of us have heard our Primary children sing "I Am a Child of God"? I think you may not have really heard it until you are met on the pier on the little island of Rarotonga by 32 beautiful Rarotongan children, with brown eyes dancing, truly singing with their hearts, "I Am a Child of God."

Another of my assignments has been to help promote the work in the intermountain and Indian missions. What a revealing experience it is to get to know our Lamanite brethren—how they are growing in wisdom, experience, and spirituality.

I have seen many fine Indian men honoring the priesthood and holding positions of leadership in branches and districts, who, months before, were yielding to the temptations of Satan. I have seen these marvelous transitions come into the lives of many. Today they live in better homes and receive better educations.

Assignment to British Isles

In the past two months, it has been my good fortune to be assigned to work with Elder Spencer W. Kimball in the

British Isles, where we have seven great missions. In Ireland, we saw 50 Irish boys and girls participate in a dance and music festival. They were so happy. It was their first. Next year it will be bigger and better, because the young members are beginning to feel the coalescing spirit of membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That night we met a fine young Chinese man who had flown back at his own expense from another country to take part in the festival so as not to disappoint the leaders. He had been working in Ireland and had been transferred by his company, but he had the spirit of a true Latter-day Saint. Shall the youth of Zion falter?

Influence on families

In each of the missions, there were strong testimonies borne by mature members who appreciated the light of the gospel in their lives. I have actually stood by the baptismal font and watched entire families being baptized the same evening and then confirmed members of the Church by authorized servants of the Lord. By the power of the Holy Ghost, they are beginning to feel the tie that binds.

Again in each of the missions, there was a goodly number of missionaries who, tearfully, thankfully, reported in testimony meeting that inactive parents were now active and either looking forward to or going to the temple; or, if one was not a member, he or she was studying with stake missionaries. Some were waiting to be baptized by returning missionary sons, and then whole families were being brought into activity because of having a worthy missionary son or daughter.

At a youth conference testimony meeting, a lovely young British mother told of her children going to the brand new church built in the neighborhood. When she discovered it was the Mormon Primary they were attending, she forbade them to go again. However, as it sometimes happens, they did go again and again, and she could see no real harm. One evening as she went up to tuck them in, she overheard her young son's prayer, "Please help me to teach my mum the gospel." Heav-

only Father heard that prayer. Today there is a whole new family feeling the tie.

Obedience the tie that binds

As we flew over the house tops from country to country, a passage of scripture kept recurring to me, that of God speaking to Moses:

"All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, . . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." (Deut. 8:1, 3.)

The same doctrine was taught by the Savior in the meridian of time:

"It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (Luke 4:4.)

This word of God is contained in the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ as it has been restored to the earth in this day. It is going forth at this very moment in many tongues to many peoples. Obedience to the word of God is the tie that will bind people, cities, communities, states, and nations together. It will tie up the wounds of an ailing world and bring peace on earth.

God bless each of us to make this so. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom we have just listened was Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Ezra Taft Benson will now speak to us. He will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Ezra Taft Benson

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters: Humbly and gratefully I stand before you.

I am truly thankful that the Church is led by a prophet of God, who, as chief watchman on the towers of Zion, has the courage and inspiration to speak out against current evils as he has done again today. Thank God for David O. McKay, our Prophet-leader!

Gratitude for Founding Fathers

I am humbly grateful to God for the blessings we all enjoy as citizens of these great United States of America. I am grateful for our Founding Fathers who were raised up with the courage to give their lives, with the unselfishness to give their fortunes and the vision to pledge their sacred honor in order to establish a new kind of government of their own choosing where men might be free. I am additionally grateful that these Founding Fathers had the faith and humility to accept the divine inspiration so necessary in setting forth the Constitution as the foundation for their new republic. The Lord said he raised up these founders and called them "wise men."

Political opportunists

Men are often asked to express an opinion on a myriad of government proposals and projects. All too often, answers seem to be based not upon solid principle, but upon the popularity of the specific government program in question. Seldom are men willing to oppose a popular program if they themselves wish to be popular—especially if they seek public office.

Such an approach to vital political questions of the day can only lead to public confusion and legislative chaos. Decisions of this nature should be based upon and measured against certain basic principles regarding the proper role of government. If principles are correct, then they can be applied to any specific proposal with confidence.

Unlike the political opportunist, the true statesman values principle above popularity and works to create popularity for those political principles which are wise and just.

Origin of human rights

It is generally agreed that the most