

Saturday, October 5

Second Day

sion calculated to preserve our free agency and expand the area in which we can exercise it in the future.

And finally, when the issues are determined, whether we stand with the winners or the losers, of this we may be sure: To make the proper choice on any issue is of far more importance to us personally than is the immediate outcome of the issue upon which we make a decision. The choices we make will affect the scope of our agency in the future. As of now, we have the right of decision. What we will have tomorrow depends upon how we decide today. In conclusion, I put to you the question and the admonition given by Elijah to Israel:

"How long halt ye between two

opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." (1 Kings 18:21.)

God grant us discernment and the courage to make right decisions, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder S. Dilworth Young

Of the First Council of the Seventy

My dear brethren and sisters: The Prophet Joseph Smith at one time said that he taught people correct principles and they could govern themselves. I would submit to you that of course he meant by that they would be following correct principles when they governed themselves. On that basis I should like to speak to you about one of those principles and its application.

In a time of his own choosing, known prophetically as the latter days, the Lord restored his Church to the earth. He also chose the man through whom he would make the restoration, a man to be known as a prophet, seer, and revelator. He let it be known by a prophetic revelation that the man thus honored should be named Joseph, after his father's name, and also after his great ancestor who was sold into Egypt. Our common testimony, yours and mine, is that this man was Joseph Smith.

The seventy organized

Within five years of the date the Church was organized, the Prophet had surprised Brigham and Joseph Young with the statement that Joseph Young was to be a president of the seventy. No man would have thought of such a group of men as the seventy.

There were to be seventy men in the quorum, and the quorum was to be presided over by seven presidents—not a president with six counselors, but seven presidents, each holding the presidential keys over the quorum.

Until that time the only information about this important body of men was contained in the narrative of Luke. He wrote:

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

"Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

"Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

"And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

"And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

"And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

"And the seventy returned again

with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 10:1-5, 8-9, 17.)

Special calling of seventy

Until 1835 no one conceived that the word seventy meant a holder of a peculiar office in the Church, with a special calling.

Now, because of the revelations of 1835, we know about the organization of the seventy in the time of the Lord.

The Lord Jesus Christ appointed the seventy and assigned them their work in his day. You have just heard a description of that work. Joseph Smith organized them and appointed them their work in 1835. President Brigham Young made changes in the detail of their organization in 1845 to fit the needs of his day, as did President John Taylor in 1885.

Each President of the Church has used the seventy as he felt inspired for his day. If the principle exhibited by these changes was not true, we would be like the Jews at the time of Christ. They were still vainly trying to fit the organization given to Moses to govern the exodus of the children of Israel to the Palestine of the Roman Empire. We should work in vain if we should try to follow the pattern of work for the one quorum laid down in 1835 or for the ten quorums organized in 1845 or for the sixty-five or so organized in 1885. It is the right of the living prophet to point the way for his generation.

Finding honest in heart

What is that way today? Our quorums are to do the detail of their work of finding the honest in heart in the geographical areas of the wards of the stakes. They are organized into groups with one of the presidents acting as the group leader or with leaders appointed by the quorum presidency.

They cultivate the honest in heart; they serve as home teachers to part-member families; they fellowship new members, acting as their home teachers. The seventies group in the ward is now the fundamental unit to assist the stake missionary program.

In 1845 Elder Parley P. Pratt stated

why, in his opinion, the seventies were organized with 70 men and seven presidents. He explained that a given territory could be divided into seven geographical areas, and that ten seventies, including a president to preside, could do the missionary work in each area. These units would be efficient flying columns to convert the people in their areas.

In times past I have tried to imagine how a quorum of seventy could be thus divided in this modern day. Now, lo, the plan is already in action. In each stake the quorum of seventy is divided into groups, one for each ward, each under a president or a group leader. While the exact number is not always ten, the pattern of the organization projected by Elder Pratt is present.

Plan of action in stakes

This is the day when the seventies are to find those within the organized wards who can be interested in the gospel. If we do that work well enough, the time may come when the same principle of organization may be applied to the full-time mission areas.

There are some who see no opportunity in this plan of action in the stakes. For these I should like to read a portion of a letter from a seventies quorum president acting as a group leader in his ward:

"We have divided our ward into eight geographical areas. Within each group we have chosen two couples to be 'neighborhood group leaders.' I, as the seventies group leader for the ward, coordinated the work. Each group has about twelve families with about two or three nonmember or part-member families. We don't have a large nonmember population. We started by calling all the neighborhood group leaders together, and with the help of the stake missionaries we oriented them to the goals. We then followed up with the group leaders, sending out printed invitations to the 'active' members in their group area to attend a cottage meeting where the missionaries explained how all members could help through fellowshiping, etc.

"A social was planned which was held the next month where every fam-

ily was invited—inactive, active, non-member and part-member. Seven of the groups have now had successful socials. The group that I live in has four nonmember families, and all were at the social. One traveling salesman even arranged his business affairs in order to come.

“We are now encouraging continued effort with these people. This is the means by which we have endeavored to carry out the program for finding families. The whole ward is excited about it. Our bishop is behind it one hundred percent.”

What is described here may not be the way to organize the ward in which you live. However, each group leader, in cooperation with the quorum council, the stake mission president, and his bishop, will be able to find a way that will fit his ward and the non-member population therein.

Seventies groups in wards

There are 4,226 wards in the Church. There is a seventies group in almost every one of these wards.

If when we stand at the bar of judgment any person living in these ward areas reports to the Lord that he didn't hear the gospel because of our failure to try to reach him, sorrow will encompass our souls. Let us not be found wanting in this effort to find, to warn, and to convert.

A few brethren have expressed fear that the group approach will tend to impair quorum unity. This could happen if a quorum council of presidents did not meet, did not plan, did not direct the work of the group leaders.

Report of quorum activities

I read from a report to its quorum of an active quorum council of presidents. This quorum is missionary minded and has strong group organization as well as good central support on a quorum basis. I quote:

“On May 25 a youth conference was held for all Aaronic Priesthood-Youth activity committees. Young folks were given training in various phases of missionary work by the full-time missionaries, assisted by such outstanding people as a former full-time mission

president, the director of the college LDS institute, a former member of the Church Priesthood Missionary Committee, and a skilled educator in methods of teaching. The young people selected and arranged the entire program, the menu, the movie, and helped plan the Saturday night dance, which was conducted by the stake MIA.”

Now this is what is pertinent to us: “Our quorum was represented by our stake mission president. We provided the kitchen help for the dinner and furnished the dessert.”

In addition, the quorum held a “Mothers Night Out” banquet, which included an art show from local people. Six nonmembers contributed to this show, which was viewed by more than five hundred people.

This quorum constructed two booths during a public celebration and grossed \$1,727 selling hamburgers, and so forth.

The quorum, at a cost of \$200, set up an information booth at the state fair. Some 1,713 guests registered—515 of them nonmembers, 396 of whom were good referrals. To help pay for this booth at the fair, the quorum engaged with a vendor for 30 percent of the profit to man another booth that sold knickknacks at the fair.

This not being enough, they also operated an ice cream booth, which grossed \$1,900, the profit to be applied to the missionary fund. This fund helps to support not only missionaries from the stake, but also supports missionaries called from the full-time missions in foreign lands, who, when released, will return home as leaders in future wards and future stakes in the far-flung areas of the Church.

The quorum keeps copies of the Book of Mormon in motels. It baptized a convert who first became interested by reading the book placed in a motel 400 miles away by a quorum of seventy of another stake.

And still the quorum found time to hold a midsummer picnic with the families of the quorum members.

Same fundamental calling

The activities of an active seventies quorum today bear little resemblance

to those of the quorums organized in 1835, 1845, 1890—but then, a fast-moving automobile or a fast-flying jet bears little resemblance to the ox-drawn wagons of those times, which at best could make 15 miles per day.

Fundamentally, today, as in that day, the calling of a seventy is to prepare the minds of men to receive the gospel and to convert them by whatever means are available or creatable. Perhaps for those of us with like responsibilities, the Savior's injunction on a different occasion might be applied: "Go, and do thou likewise." (Luke 10:37.)

All of this detail comes because of the gospel. These men believed it, and do believe it. These men are inspired by their love of Christ to go out and do these things in the hope that what they do will be the very thing they

can do to bring more people into the Church.

I accept the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior, as they do, and I bear witness of him that he lives, and that we are his servants. He is the God of this earth and its Creator. President McKay is the prophet, seer, and revelator chosen by the Lord to bear the work and to carry the responsibility at this time. It is our business to assist with that responsibility and to uphold and to sustain him, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder Loren C. Dunn

Of the First Council of the Seventy

In this audience today is my mother. My father passed away some four years ago. Mother has been staying with us for the past day or two; and this morning prior to coming to this conference, I asked her if she would offer family prayer for us, the reason being that I wanted her blessing, which I received. This took me back to younger days when we as children would seek the blessing of our parents before we undertook any kind of responsibility or sought to follow a different pursuit in life.

Teachings of parents

I honor my parents. I am grateful for them. I can remember the time in my life, though, when I had to find out for myself about the things they already knew concerning this Church. But they had made it easy for me because of their faith and because of their understanding. I had a relatively easy time learning how to pray to God, because I thought of him as having the same principles and qualities embodied in my own parents. And it became easy to pray to someone such as that,

who not only had those qualities and principles but was perfect.

This has caused me to think of the words of Enos in the Book of Mormon when he said:

"Behold, it came to pass that I, Enos, knowing my father that he was a just man—for he taught me in his language, and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—and blessed be the name of my God for it—

"And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins.

"Behold, I went to hunt beasts in the forests; and the words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart.

"And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication. . . ." (Enos 1-4.)

Wanting to know for yourself

Enos had been raised by good parents. According to his own words, he had been taught by his parents in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.