

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.

Yet there was a sort of gap between what his parents knew and what he knew. But one day he went to hunt beasts in the forests. It was then that the words he heard his father speak about eternal life and the joy of the Saints sank deep into his heart. And it was then that he had to know for himself.

Quite often this is the pattern of young people today. You hear the words of your parents and Church teachers. Sometimes these words are not of personal value until you reach the point of wanting to know for yourself, or until such time as these words are challenged, or there is some other experience that prompts you to action.

Enos wanted to know, and because of the teachings of his parents, he knew how to find out—and he did.

But different was the recent experience of a college student who had also heard all the familiar words from his teachers and others as he was growing up. He had not discovered if these things were true prior to the time he engaged in a particular course of study that challenged his faith in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He subsequently rejected the words without ever finding out if they were true. And, in a sense, he became inactive in the Church without ever having been in the Church—or at least without ever having experienced the spiritual blessings of the Church, a principle of which is a testimony of its truthfulness.

Vitality of the Church

There are those who see this Church from the outside and marvel at its programs and organization. They ask how this is accomplished, expecting that in a few sentences a formula can be given that they can take back and apply to their own organizations.

The success and vitality of the Church, however, lies in something that is unseen. It is the power and spirit that enlightens the person who gains for himself a true knowledge that God and Jesus Christ are actually divine, living beings, and that this is the Church of Jesus Christ revealed from God and not devised by man. To know this is to be free from many doubts

and frustrations. To know this is to be able to look ahead with confidence and courage and peace of mind. And to know this is to know that God is actually there and that his love for us is both personal and real. And when the pressures and problems of life become too great, there is always a retreat to this relationship with the Lord for comfort and solace and renewed strength.

Ways to gain knowledge

I suppose there are many ways to gain this knowledge, but I know of none more sure than these two promises. The first is from the book of John and says:

“My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” (John 7:16-17.)

The second promise has already been heard in this great conference. Let me read it to you again.

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.” (Moro. 10:4-5.)

Establish relationship with the Lord

Chances are, if you are a young member of this Church, you have heard these words many times before. Perhaps now is the time, if you have not already done so, to do as Enos did and establish your own relationship with the Lord, to gain your own testimony that he lives and that he directs the affairs of his Church.

His promise is that if you live the standards which he has set down, and read the Book of Mormon with faith and prayerful intent, he will manifest these things unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost.

I think of the words of President McKay, not only at the beginning of this conference but prior to that, when he said:

"He is our head. This is his Church. Without his divine guidance and constant inspiration, we cannot succeed; with his guidance, with his inspiration, we cannot fail."

To this I humbly add my own witness. I know that God lives, and that Jesus Christ is his Son and Savior of the world; that this Church was restored by a prophet of God and is directed by a prophet of God today; that this Church is directed and led by revelation.

God knows and loves and cares, and he is most anxious that you young people establish your own personal relationship with him, so he can, by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, arm you with this divine knowledge, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Boyd K. Packer

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

I have thrilled with you, my brethren and sisters, at the singing of this great pioneer anthem ["Come, Come Ye Saints"]. I think there is no sound quite like the Saints singing at conference.

This is a year of conventions and conferences. Many of them are held throughout the world. They are of many kinds: governmental, political, business, educational, religious, but of them all this one is unique. Nowhere in the world is there, or could there be, an assembly such as this.

Purposes of general conference

President David O. McKay lists the purposes for holding general conferences as follows:

"... Reference to the Doctrine and Covenants will disclose the fact that there are four principal purposes for holding conferences of the Church:

"First, to transact current Church business.

"Second, to hear reports and general Church statistics.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

The congregation and Combined Choruses will now join in singing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," after which Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, will speak to us.

The congregation and the Combined Choruses joined in singing the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve.

"Third, to 'approve of those names which I (the Lord) have appointed, or to disapprove of them.'

"Fourth, to worship the Lord in sincerity and reverence, and to give and to receive encouragement, exhortation, and instruction." (*Conference Report*, October 1938, pp. 130-31.)

Early conferences

The first conference was held on June 9, 1830. I read from the minutes:

"Our numbers were about thirty, besides whom many assembled with us, who were either believers or anxious to learn. Having opened by singing and prayer, we partook together of the emblems of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We then proceeded to confirm several who had lately been baptized, after which we called out and ordained several to the various offices of the Priesthood. Much exhortation and instruction was given, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us in a miraculous manner—many of our number prophesied, whilst others had the heavens opened to their view."