

About this event the apostle Paul said, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. . . .

". . . so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

"For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that . . .

". . . the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:13-17.)

What a great day to look forward to, and what a disaster will involve those who are still unprepared. Even nineteen hundred years ago Jesus knew a great deal about our personal and community needs. He looked forward to our day and was greatly concerned for our welfare. He gave a comparative appraisal of our times when he said, ". . . as the days of [Noah] were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:37.)

### Our primary concern

Then he projected our greatest opportunity when he said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14.) In the latter-day fulfillment of his own promise he has reestablished his Church and has re-

vealed anew a fulness of his original doctrines, including the greatest of all truths, that God lives and that the God of Genesis, the God of Sinai, and the God of Calvary is also the God of the latter days.

As we pass along the bridge of our lives, we ought to understand that our greatest latter-day need is not for bigger industries or more oil wells or greater power plants or a more ample gold supply. Our most critical problems are not our population explosions or our projected food shortages. Our primary concern should be centered in getting a sufficient love of God and truth enshrined in our hearts, that we will obey all of his commandments.

Christ is the Good Shepherd and the Great Teacher, but he is also the Savior of the world. He is the rock of our eternal salvation. He is the Lord of truth, the Prince of Peace, the Son of God, and the giver of all good things. We must not forget that he is also the Christ of the latter days, and as we meditate before him, may we be inspired to make the best and the most of that great life which he has given us to live, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Alvin R. Dyer

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve.

We shall now hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve.

### Elder Howard W. Hunter

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

During this conference we have sat at the feet of great teachers, men whom we sustain as our leaders, men who have faith in God. My thoughts have been lifted and my testimony has been strengthened. I am thankful to my brethren, and I express appreciation to them for the forthright manner in which they have raised their voices to witness that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior of all mankind.

### Evidence of a creator

I, too, know that God lives. There is ample evidence of this fact, but concrete proof is not necessary to those who have faith. All nature portrays the existence of a supreme being. In this material world, we have learned that every building has a builder and everything that is made has a maker. As we look at this Tabernacle, the great organ that has been played for us, the clock

on the wall, the camera that carries the image to the world, the lights, the microphones before me, we realize that each of these had its maker. Outside those things made by man, all of nature whispers to my reasoning that there was a creator. I know this to be God.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1.) There was a divine plan. For every plan there must have been a planner, and for every creation there must have been a creator. Could the perfect universe emerge without a divine plan? Could it have come about by some mechanical chance? Such thoughts are against the stronger reasoning. Such belief could not be supported in view of the tangible evidence which portrays that there is a supreme being, one who had a divine plan, one who was the Creator and the builder of the universe.

### Creation of man

Not only did God plan and create the heavens and the earth, but the plan also included the creation of man. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:27.) Thus we are his creation; we are literally his children, in his image and likeness. This would necessarily include the intellect, which distinguishes man from all other animal life. We are creatures of the flesh as well as the spirit, and the great striving in life is to develop the spirit as well as the physical body. True growth is dependent upon our conscious effort in lifting our awareness above and beyond those things which are physical.

As children of God, we learn in our young years to know our Heavenly Father in a childlike way, and if we follow the right course, the time comes when we understand the larger meaning of this relationship to our Heavenly Parent. We realize that we are made in his spiritual image as well as his physical image. In our more spiritual maturity, a whole new vista of reality opens to us; and we commence to understand the statement of Paul, who said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16.)

### Divinity of Christ

Not only do I believe that God lives, but I believe that his Son, Jesus Christ, also lives, and is the Savior of all mankind. Our day is one in which there is a great diversity of belief with regard to many fundamental statements of scripture. Modernists deny the virgin birth of Jesus. They deny his divine power demonstrated by the many miracles he performed during his short ministry.

Modernists dispute that the Master voluntarily offered himself to atone for the sins of mankind, and they deny that there was in fact such an atonement. It is our firm belief that it is a reality, and nothing is more important in the entire divine plan of salvation than the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We believe that salvation comes because of the atonement. In its absence the whole plan of creation would come to naught. Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:17-18.) Without this atoning sacrifice, temporal death would be the end, and there would be no resurrection and no purpose in our spiritual lives. There would be no hope of eternal life.

### Resurrection of Jesus

Those who call themselves modernists deny the fact that Jesus rose from the tomb with the same body that he laid down, and many deny the fact that he was indeed resurrected. Latter-day Saints believe in the literal resurrection of Christ in precisely the same manner described by the writers of the New Testament. From their record we learn that the same body of flesh and bones that was taken from the cross and laid in the tomb did come forth to live again. After this event, those who had been with him during his ministry were discussing what had been said of his resurrection:

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24:36-39.)

### Ascension of Jesus

Modernists refute the fact of his ascension, but Luke testifies as to what took place on that occasion after the resurrected Savior had given instructions to the apostles:

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

"And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." (Acts 1:6-9.)

### Divine sonship attested

God the Father attested to the divinity of the sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ at the very commencement of his ministry:

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:16-17.)

He was the Creator of the earth, for he said, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath

the Father glorified his name." (3 Ne. 9:15.)

God the Father also attested to his saviorship when speaking to Moses: "And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth. . . ." (Moses 1:6.)

### His birth foretold

In the Old Testament the birth of the Master was foretold in the Book of Isaiah: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7:14.) And in the Book of Micah, we are told he would be born in Bethlehem. (Mic. 5:2.)

Thus the ancient prophets testified of his divine birth and mission, and the New Testament confirms the happenings foretold by these Old Testament prophets and bears witness of that virgin birth and divine mission of the Savior. Peter said, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10:42-43.)

### Testimony of Apostle John

One of the greatest testimonies and witnesses of the divinity of Christ that has ever been penned was written by the apostle John in his gospel, one of the simplest yet most profound books in the New Testament. After Simon Peter and his brother were called by Jesus to follow him, he saw John and his brother James "mending their nets; and he called them.

"And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him." (Matt. 4:21-22.)

John was well qualified to attest to the divinity of the Master, because he was with him from this time throughout the remainder of his ministry. He was chosen by Jesus as one of the twelve, and was one of the three

apostles who were closest to Jesus. He was present when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, when Jesus was transfigured, when Jesus went apart to pray in Gethsemane. He was sent with Peter to prepare the Passover. He was with the twelve at the appearance of the Savior after his resurrection and at the time of his ascension. No one could be more qualified to testify of him.

### "The Word"

In writing the prologue to his gospel, John commenced with these words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2.)

The phrase "in the beginning" echoes the opening words of the Old Testament. John refers to Jesus as the "Word," a title given to him in many instances in both the New and the Old Testament. He continues: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." This statement leaves no room for an exception—all things were made by him. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not." (John 1:3-5.)

The life mentioned is life eternal, which he revealed to the world, which he promised to his believers, which he died to give them, to which he will raise them up, because he hath the life in himself. He is the resurrection and the life. The darkness mentioned is the state of man's mind, which drags him down, that he does not comprehend.

### Mission of John the Baptist

The evangelist then explains that the mission of John the Baptist is inferior to that of Jesus: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

"He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light." (John 1:6-8.)

In other words, the immediate pur-

pose of the mission of John the Baptist was to bear witness that Jesus was the true Light, the true teacher of the way of life eternal, and to invite men to believe in him for the remission of their sins and be baptized. John the Baptist was not the Messiah or the leader of a great movement; he was the herald and witness, bearing testimony to the nature and divine titles of Jesus, and the witness through whom God attested the divine sonship of Jesus.

### The true Light

After stating that the mission of the Baptist was to bear witness of the Light, John continues his testimony of Jesus: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:9-11.)

Why was it at that time or why is it now that some will not receive him? No doubt they had expected something entirely different. They were looking for a leader in political and social reform and they had little interest in spiritual things. "The world was made by him, and the world knew him not." There are those today who pass him by without recognizing him.

### True sons of God

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13.)

Thus, to those who have faith in him is given the right or the authority to become the sons of God. The fatherhood of God is universal in the sense that we are all his created children, but those who believe in Christ, who accept him as the Son of God and the Savior of the world, have the right to become true sons of God. This is a gift of God dependent upon faith in Christ.

In conclusion, John states his purpose for the writing of this theological message in these words: "But these

are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31.) This is John's witness, and this apostolic testimony has been preserved and comes down to us as a record of what the first witnesses saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears.

As John infers, this record sets forth the historic facts, but merely accepting the facts will not produce belief. There is a bigger faith than one which comes from seeing and hearing, a faith that can dispense with tangible proof and visible evidence. It is the faith that comes from reliance upon the word of the Lord. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. (See John 20:29.)

### Evidences in this day

These are the attestations to the divinity of Jesus Christ by God the Father, by the prophets of the Old Testament, by those who were with him in his ministry, by those who, after a study of the facts, are touched by the Spirit and have faith. In addition, there are many other evidences of his divinity in this day. I refer to the marvelous first vision in which the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Prophet, the revelations to the Prophet for the benefit of the Saints, the organization of this Church in these

latter-days, the missionary work, the temple work for the living and the dead, the testimony of a present living prophet.

If, after all of the cumulative evidence and all of these testimonies, Christ should be eliminated from our belief, what would be the result? This would not be his Church; the Bible would fall as the word of God; there would be no hope of a literal resurrection; there would be no assurance of eternal life. But Christ is not eliminated from our belief. His divinity is a reality, and to all of the testimonies that have been borne of him, we add our witness.

I have intended these statements to represent my belief, my conviction, my witness that God lives; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that this is his Church; that there is a prophet of the Lord on the earth today who speaks the will of the Lord to his children. This is a restatement of our belief, our testimony, and the teachings of this conference by those whom we sustain as our leaders. I pray the Lord to bless us with this abiding faith, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Alvin R. Dyer

President David O. McKay has asked his son, Elder Robert R. McKay, to read you his closing message for this conference.

### President David O. McKay

*(Read by his son Robert R. McKay)*

And now, my brethren and sisters, just a word in parting. This truly has been a glorious and memorable conference. May our Heavenly Father sanctify the instructions, admonitions, and testimonies that we have heard throughout the various sessions. May he fill our hearts with love for one another in the true brotherhood of Christ.

### Unity of the brethren

At this time I should like to express gratitude for the support, blessings, and assistance of my counselors and members of the Council of the Twelve;

also, for the help of the Patriarch to the Church, the Assistants to the Twelve, the members of the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric. You can feel radiating from these men that for which Christ prayed when he offered that great intercessory prayer in which he said, among other things, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." (John 17:11.)

These brethren prove daily, as was