

President N. Eldon Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir will now favor us with "Christ, The Lord, Is Risen," following which President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency will speak to us.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the anthem, "Christ, the Lord, Is Risen."

President Hugh B. Brown, first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church will now speak to us.
President Brown.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

First Counselor in the First Presidency

The apostle Peter, writing to the saints of his time, said, as recorded in First Peter 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."

A peculiar people

Whether or not all will agree that these characterizations are applicable to the Saints of this day, I am sure most will at least agree that we are a peculiar people—not in any unkind way, but perhaps most would say we are a *different* people. My purpose for the next few moments is to examine and discuss some of those differences.

Some of the antagonisms that exist between people and between nations result from the fact that they do not understand one another.

"Not understood," the poet has said.

"We gather false impressions

And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions;

And thus men rise and fall, and live
and die—

Not understood.

"O God! that men would see a little
clearer,

Or judge less harshly where they cannot see;

O God, that men would draw a little
nearer

To one another; they'd be nearer
Thee—

And understood."

—Thomas Bracken

(Poems of Inspiration, Halycon House, 1928, p. 188)

We may discuss our subject under

two general headings for a few minutes, namely, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The scriptures tell us that it is life eternal to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent.

What is man?

As to man, we join with David of old and ask, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Ps. 8:4.) And just here we ask the pertinent question, "What is the relationship that exists between God and man?"

Dr. James E. Talmage summed up this part of our subject as follows:

"What is man in this boundless setting of sublime splendor? I answer you potentially now, actually to be, he is greater and grander, more precious in the arithmetic of God than all the planets and the suns of space. For him they were created. They are the handiwork of God. Man is his son. In this world man is given dominion over a few things. It is his privilege to achieve supremacy over many things. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Incomprehensibly grand as are the physical creations of the earth and of space, they have been brought into existence as a means to an end, and are necessary to the realization of the supreme purpose which in the words of the Creator is thus declared: For behold, this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

What is God?

May we then discuss our subject

briefly with respect to God, and examine some of the things that have been believed and taught in connection with that subject.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was generally believed that God was incorporeal and immaterial, without body, without parts or passions, disregarding the facts that God loves righteousness and he hates iniquity, and that love and hate, of course, are passions.

It has been claimed that God was without form, even though the holy scriptures teach that God created man in his own image. In fact, we are told by Paul the apostle that Jesus Christ was in the express image of his Father. Are we then created in the image of a formless entity?

For us, God is not an abstraction. He is not an idea, a metaphysical principle, an impersonal force or power. He is a concrete, living person. And though in our human frailty we cannot know the total mystery of his being, we know that he is akin to us, for he is revealed to us in the divine personality of his Son, Jesus Christ, and he is, in fact, our Father.

The Church teaches that when God created man in his own image, he did not divest himself of that image. He is still in human form and is possessed of sanctified and perfected human qualities, which we all admire. All through the holy scriptures, the Father and the Son are seen to be separate and distinct personages. We reaffirm the doctrine of the ancient scripture and of all the prophets that asserts that man was created in the image of God and that God possessed such human qualities as consciousness, will, love, mercy, justice. In other words, he is an exalted, perfected, and glorified Being.

Man's eternal nature

The late President Brigham H. Roberts, in one of his later writings, discussed some of the principles of the gospel that I desire to give wider circulation. I shall quote and paraphrase him.

Under the uninspired teachings of

men and creeds as they apply to man—pre-mortal, mortal, and postmortal man—it was taught that while man's body was created by God, his origin was purely an earthly one. We believe that before the creation of the body, all men existed as intelligences. These intelligences were not created or made, neither indeed can they be; the intelligent entity in man which we call spirit or soul is a self-existing entity, uncreated and eternal. Thus man is crowned with the dignity which belongs to his divine and eternal nature.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or the Mormon Church, if you prefer) *claims to be a bold, prophetic, and inspired Church built upon the rock of revelation.* It calls upon man to cooperate with God in his avowed purpose to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. This is a divine partnership and is available to all. It gives added meaning to the term "the brotherhood of man." It is not simply a philosophy of life; it is a divine plan or blueprint of life—pre-existent life, mortal life, and postmortal life.

System of continuing education

The gospel is a system of continuing education, resulting in eternal progression. Education is, in fact, a part of our religion. We believe the glory of God is intelligence.

The Lord said: "And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom." (D&C 88:77.)

Just here, we might ask the question: Is there any communication between God and man, or has there ever been? If there ever was such, why not now?

Continuous revelation

And this brings us to the question of *revelation.*

At the beginning of the last century, the idea prevailed among almost all Christian churches that while there was a time when revelations from God were given, when angels visited the earth and imparted divine knowledge to men, when there were living among

men certain ones called prophets who were able to declare the mind and will of our Heavenly Father, yet all this was allegedly discontinued.

Though belief in continuous revelation seems to have been quite universally accepted in the past, orthodox Christianity maintains that there can be no current revelation; that no revelation has been given since the crucifixion of Christ and the death of the apostles, and furthermore that none would be given in the future; that the volume of scripture is completed and forever closed—no angels, no opening of the heavens, no man authorized to speak for God. All this was ended.

The scriptures declare that some of the prophets talked with God face to face. (Exod. 33:11.) For instance, we are told in Exodus that Moses spoke face to face with God as one man speaketh to his friends. In Exodus 3:6, the Lord declared: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." We claim the Church is built upon the foundation of divinely inspired apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone.

Office of a prophet

Generally, when we speak of a prophet, we have in mind one who predicts future events, one who foretells things that will come to pass. Indeed, that is, in part, the office of a prophet—in part it is what is expected of him. But a prophet should be primarily a teacher of men, an expounder of the things of God. The inspiration of the Almighty must give him understanding, and when given he must declare it fearlessly to the people of his time and to future generations. He must be a seer who can help others to see, a teacher sent of God to instruct a people, to enlighten an age. This is the primary office of a prophet.

Based upon the teachings of the Holy Bible, we assert that revelation from heaven was common in all dispensations of the gospel from Adam to the time when Christ was upon the earth. We agree that it apparently ceased for a time because of apostasy after the beginning of the first century of

the Christian era. The founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints asserts that he had a great and overpowering revelation from God—in fact, a visitation in which he beheld the Father and the Son. Later, other heavenly beings appeared.

There is in all men an animated, ruling, characteristic essence, or spirit, which is himself. This spirit, dull or bright, petty or grand, pure or foul, looks out of the eyes, sounds in the voice, and appears in the manners of each individual. This is what we call personality.

Man's salvation

As to man's *salvation*, some have taught that God, of his own volition, had predestined some men and angels to everlasting destruction, while others were ordained to eternal life and glory, not for any good or ill that they had done or could do, but because their fate is fixed by divine decree. Those whom he would save he would move by irresistible grace to their salvation; those whom he had predestined should be damned might not escape, struggle they ever so persistently. No prayers could save them; no act of obedience might mitigate their punishment; no hungering and thirsting after righteousness would bring them any blessedness. They must perish, and that eternally! Those who perish in ignorance of Christ—the heathen nations, for instance—were damned. So said those who expounded this creed.

Others taught that infants dying in infancy without receiving Christian baptisms were damned, and that everlastingly. By some, unbaptized infants were denied burial in sanctified ground. "Hell's Half Acre" was a reality in some graveyards. We humbly but unequivocally proclaim the eternal and revealed truth that through the atonement of Christ, *all* mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

Salvation and damnation

Let us refer for a moment to the significance of the terms *salvation* and *damnation*. It was taught in earlier days and to some extent today that

these two terms meant either the attainment of heaven or the assignment to hell—referring to the former, the attainment of heaven, as a mysterious, indefinite state enjoyed somewhere beyond the bounds of time and space, and to the latter, to which many were to be consigned, as a place of everlasting anguish and eternal misery.

It was believed that if one gained heaven by ever so small a margin, he entered upon a complete possession of all the supernal ecstasy enjoyed by the angels and the holiest of saints. If he missed even by ever so narrow a margin, he was doomed to everlasting torment, to be endured with the wickedest of men and the vilest of devils, from which there was to be no deliverance.

Graded state of future life

Against these dogmas of the attainment of heaven or the assignment to hell with equality of glory in the one and equal severity of punishment in the other, we assert that a just God has provided a graded state of existence for all men in the future life.

Upon this subject the restored Church teaches with the apostle Paul that there are many kingdoms of glory in which men may live, each in a sphere suited to his nature, disposition, and the degree of his intelligence. Paul taught that there is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars, and that men will exist in varying degrees of glory in the hereafter; that as the stars of the heavens differ in infinite degrees of brightness, so also will men, in their future, exist in places and states of infinite variety, corresponding to the variations of their intelligence, knowledge, tastes, requirements, inclinations, and aspirations.

Love of God and man

In Luke 10 we read: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind." (Luke 10:27.) This is but a part of Christ's injunction, but seemingly a part not often stressed either in press or pulpit. We hear often of the necessity of loving God with all

our hearts and with all our souls, but there was a purpose in his including *mind* in his instructions. Any person's conception of Deity must come within his mental horizon, which is determined by the degree of his intelligence. Man, by his reasoning, naturally endows God with his own noblest and highest ideals, which, if he be studious and devout, are ever growing. Intellectual activity produces an ever-changing, because ever-growing, concept of God. Once the mind has grasped the idea of God, it will burn and glow and seek to assimilate and radiate, to adore, and emulate. This love of God by the mind of man, when accompanied by loving him with heart and soul, will light the pathway to salvation. The Master placed love of God and of fellowmen as paramount to all divine commandments.

Acceptance of gospel principles

All Church members, then, are enjoined to understand and accept the principles of the gospel, of which faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is paramount.

We must receive its saving ordinances and then go on unto perfection. Salvation is an eternal quest for knowledge. Man cannot be saved in ignorance. It is more than a philosophy of life: it is a divine plan or blueprint of life—preexistent, mortal, and post-mortal life.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a revealed and challenging religion. It calls upon all men to cooperate with God in an effort to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

We firmly declare that the gospel of Jesus Christ does not belong simply to an antiquated world that has passed away; it is a real and powerful force in our world here and now, a force that invests our individual lives with meaning and purpose.

Yes, we doubtless are in many ways a peculiar people, a different people. We do not claim to be better than any other people. We have our differences; we have our difficulties; we are mortal. But we do claim that we have a mission, and therefore we have

a wide-ranging missionary system that enables people throughout the world to hear the message of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To the truth of that message I humbly bear my own witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency has just spoken to us.

The Tabernacle Choir will sing "Glorious Is The King." Following the singing President Alvin R. Dyer, a

counselor in the First Presidency, will speak to us.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "Glorious Is the King."

President N. Eldon Tanner

To those who have just tuned in on this conference we extend a most hearty welcome.

President Alvin R. Dyer of the First Presidency will now address us.

PRESIDENT ALVIN R. DYER

Counselor in the First Presidency

Once again, my brothers and sisters, we are feeling the surge and influence of this great conference of the Church. I am grateful with you that President McKay is listening and watching this broadcast.

The precepts of men

The prophet Nephi once spoke of the woeful condition of mankind when deceived by the precepts of men. Said he:

"... wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!" (2 Ne. 28:26.)

The Lord has warned his people of the penetration of evil in the last days, "seeking to destroy the souls of men." (D&C 10:27.)

We can see the need of these warnings in the evil trends that are deteriorating man's sense of decency and moral standards.

The divine declaration, which gives unto man the right of moral agency as once declared—"Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" (Gen. 3:22)—has come under question, and man is seeking by the concepts of men to destroy moral agency by creating what they have chosen to call the "new morality." If we accept the evil doctrines of slanted educational programs, we will witness

a breakdown of morals that could bring about a depraved new social order.

The "new morality"

The "new morality" denies distinctions between right or wrong, good or evil, substituting a code that decides the right or wrong of behavior according to human need, regardless of what that need is distorted to be.

If we accept the teachings of this concept, it could lead to a society burdened with mass control based upon principles of unrighteous dominion over the individual. It is well known that a communistic philosophy would like to see this succeed in America and throughout the world.

Sex education programs

These deceptive and shadowed objectives of well-propagandized programs are moving at a very rapid clip. The first to which I refer is sex education or family life education, which is placing emphasis on raw sex in the school classroom, creating widespread contention, causing deep concern among parents and leaders.

The programmers of this type of sex education, aware of resistance, are fortified with worked-out methods to deal with parental and community opposition. This matter needs the serious concern of an aroused public