

the dead had to be gathered as best it could.

We thus learned by doing, and from this experience sought better and more efficient ways to do this work.

Now in our day we find ourselves closer to the end than ever before. God has provided for our use a greater knowledge of how to gather records of the dead. He has provided rapid methods of copying information by using microfilm. We have jet planes to speed the gathering of these records, and modern tools, such as coding, card punch, and sorting machines, optical scanners, electronic computers, and other types of modern business machines, that can be used to compile and index these records into usable form. Temples are being erected in ever-increasing numbers, and Church membership is growing to provide worthy people who can serve in those temples.

GIANT system

It is no wonder that the present slow and cumbersome methods of preparing names for temple ordinance work are giving way to the faster, more accurate GIANT system.

Yet with all these changes, the basic principles of salvation for the dead haven't changed. We are still responsible for gathering and submitting names for our kindred dead. We still have to do the temple ordinance work for those we identify as our progenitors. We still have to maintain our own family book of remembrance with pedigree charts and family group sheets of our direct ancestors to make sure that the temple ordinance work has been done for all our loved ones.

I regard this new method as a higher system, simpler, more rapid, and more accurate than any we have had hereto-

fore. As I see it, this progress is a natural growth of that truth which God gives us as we seek for answers in further prayer:

"And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.

"For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith." (D&C 98:11-12.)

Further light and knowledge

Thus we have sought for further light and knowledge, having been obedient to the preliminary concepts. God has given us additional truth and new precepts to apply in our work of salvation for the dead. This is a clear voice telling us what to do. It is a well-defined path for future work. An improved way has been prepared to aid us in completing the work leading to the organization of the family of God.

May God grant that we will respond to this new concept and devote a part of our time to this important work. This new procedure has been approved by the Prophet of the Lord and has the blessing of the First Presidency. I have a personal testimony that it is approved of God, for as I pray for knowledge of this truth I have a good, warm feeling in my heart. I give you this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Alvin R. Dyer

Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

We have received from the Lord a divine commission to carry his message of salvation to the nations and peoples of the earth.

We announce that God has restored to us in this day the fullness of his everlasting gospel.

We have received anew the same

priesthood, the same keys, the same doctrines, the same organization, the same plan of salvation that Jesus gave the saints in his day. And we are now commanded to offer this restored religion to all men everywhere as rapidly as our strength and ability permit.

Restoration of the gospel

Our Lord's beloved disciple John saw in vision the restoration of the gospel in our day and recorded in the Bible this testimony: ". . . I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth."

Then, as guided by the spirit of inspiration, he recorded that this restored gospel was to be preached "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" before the hour of God's judgment, before the second coming of the Son of Man. (See Rev. 14:6-7.)

The restoration of gospel knowledge commenced in modern times in the spring of 1820. The promised angel began the process of revealing gospel truths and powers in September of 1823. By November of 1831 the restoration was sufficiently advanced for the Lord to say to the world through Joseph Smith: "O inhabitants of the earth, I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth.

"And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (D&C 133:36-37.)

Commandment to preach gospel

We are thus commanded to preach the restored gospel in all the world.

We are to carry its saving truths to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

We are to raise the warning voice and testify of the mighty things which God hath wrought in our day.

We are to gather the lost sheep of Israel into the fold of their true Shepherd.

We are to take the message of salvation to the ends of the earth.

Now what have we done to fulfill the divine decree, and what must we yet do?

From the day of the organization of the Church in April 1830 to the present moment, faithful members of the Church have taught the gospel and testified of its divinity. With unwearying diligence we have offered the saving truths to as many of our Father's children as our strength and circumstances have permitted.

The restored gospel was preached in the United States and Canada, in Great Britain, western Europe, and Scandinavia. Soon missionaries were in the islands of the Pacific, in Mexico and South America, and in a host of nations.

Missionary service

Ten times ten thousand missionaries and more have left farm and factory, shop and store, and the halls of higher learning—voluntarily and at their own expense—to devote three hundred thousand man years of service in preaching the gospel.

Ten times a hundred thousand and more have believed their message.

Ten times ten million and more have heard the warning voice.

But with it all, we have scarce commenced the assigned labor. We have yet to preach the gospel to the ten times two hundred million people in Russia, China, India, Asia, Malasia, Indonesia, and so on.

But this we shall assuredly do, for we are on the Lord's errand; we are engaged in his work; he has decreed its over-all success and triumph; and none can stay his hand.

We have done as much, or nearly so, in days past and present, as our numbers and means allowed. At our present rate of growth, the Church is doubling in membership every 20 or 25 years. Will it be long, at this rate, before we have 25,000 missionaries serving at one time? Or 50,000? Or 100,000? Or as many as the needs of the ministry require to fulfill the divine command to the uttermost?

Furthermore, our means of travel and teaching are improving. Today we

have jet planes and radio and television. Who knows what we shall have tomorrow? Whatever the scientific advances may be, they shall be used for the furtherance of the Lord's work and for the spread of truth in the earth.

With it all, however, the face-to-face and voice-to-ear testimony of the elders of Israel will always be required in teaching the gospel. One elder will always have to stand with one believing soul in the waters of baptism to perform that ordinance without which no accountable man can be saved.

Future growth of Church

What then of the future growth of the Church? Eventually, in a millennial day, the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, meaning that every living soul on earth shall be converted to the truth, for truth shall prevail.

In the meantime, we shall go forward according to the divine timetable, a timetable under which the Lord will prepare the way for us to teach the gospel in one nation after another as rapidly as our strength and means are sufficient for us to do the work.

Nephi foresaw that we shall establish congregations of the saints in all nations and among all peoples and kindreds before the promised unity of the faith. Speaking of this dispensation, he said:

"... I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw." (1 Ne. 14:12.)

Ordinances of exaltation

And John the Revelator recorded that the faithful in latter days would praise the Lord by saying: "Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

"And hast made us unto our God

kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:9-10.)

That is, before the millennial era, before the time when Christ shall reign personally upon the earth, the elect of God among every kindred, the saints who speak every tongue, the converts among all peoples and nations, having first believed the restored gospel, will go to the temples of God and receive the ordinances of exaltation whereby they qualify to become kings and priests.

A witness to all nations

Truly did the Lord Jesus say of our day: "... this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. . . ." (Joseph Smith 1:31.)

And truly did Joseph Smith prophesy: "... the Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the great Jehovah shall say the work is done." (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 540.)

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Alvin R. Dyer

The congregation and choir will now join in singing "How Firm a Foundation," conducted by Jay E. Welch.

The congregation and choir then sang the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation."

President Dyer

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Paul H. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy, and who is now serving as president of the New England Mission.