

Glory in tribulations

We can experience what Paul was expressing in his epistle to the Romans, when he said:

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

"And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. 5:1-5.)

In conclusion, I testify to the truthfulness of these things. They are part and parcel of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I know they are true. I have read and been impressed by the testimony of others. Paul, for example, having thrice sought the Lord to remove "a thorn in the flesh," was answered: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Then Paul answered: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:9-10.)

Growth through adversity

Not only have I been impressed by the testimonies of others; I have been

eyewitness to the operation of these principles in the lives of my own acquaintances. I have seen the remorse and despair in the lives of men who, in the hour of trial, have cursed God and died spiritually. And I have seen people rise to great heights from what seemed to be unbearable burdens.

Finally, I have sought the Lord in my own extremities and learned for myself that my soul has made its greatest growth as I have been driven to my knees by adversity and affliction.

To these things I bear solemn witness in the name of Jesus Christ, our beloved Savior, and in his name I invoke a comforting and sustaining blessing upon each of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Hugh B. Brown

The comforting and encouraging address just given was by Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing: "The Artisan," with Olga Gardner as soloist, following which there will be a brief organ interlude and then Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "The Artisan" with Olga Gardner as soloist.

Following this, the Choir sang the number, "Come Ye Thankful People."

ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

Of the Council of the Twelve

● My brethren and sisters, seen and unseen, godless forces threaten us of the free world. My text is from Paul's timely admonition:

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:11-12.)

A modern-day prophet has said, "...

when acts and schemes are manifestly contrary to the revealed word of the Lord, we feel justified in warning people against them. We may be charitable and forbearing to the sinner, but must condemn the sin. . . ." (David O. McKay, quoted in *Statements on Communism and the Constitution of the United States* [Deseret Book, 1964].)

Fear for free world

Correspondence and the printed word, crossing my desk daily, proclaim the deep concern and agonizing fear of alert people, especially concerned parents, in my own and other Christian nations, fear for the future of America and the free world, fear we may lose all we hold dear, and soon.

While most Americans continue to enjoy their comfortable complacency, the fact remains that the American way of life, with its spiritual foundation, is under powerful attack.

The godless worldwide Communist conspiracy expects one day soon to take over the United States. With the active support of some 150 known or suspected Communist fronts and infiltrated groups identified by the FBI (*Human Events*, September 20, 1969); with almost half the student bodies of colleges and universities of America reported to have elected presidents who support the revolution; with acts of treason against the United States committed daily throughout the nation, and laws on treason and sedition shattered by decisions of the Supreme Court; with riots in 125 cities within five days' time, 2,600 buildings burned and 713 of them in the nation's capital; with revolutions interrupting operations of 200 colleges and universities since Christmas; with the Reds ordering the New Left to "close down 100 universities in 1970"; and with the constant aid of leftists, dupes, fellow travelers, and complacent citizens, the conspiracy is now moving into what they claim is the final stages for a nationwide "revolutionary take over." (*The National Program Letter*; Dr. McBirnie's *Newsletter*, both October 1969.)

Some of the most prominent targets

now under withering fire in this war against us are the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Constitution of the United States, the institution of private property, and the basic concepts of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Surely this is a time when consideration might well be given by the people of America, and the entire free world, to the important matter of citizenship responsibility and, more importantly, membership in the churches of the free world.

Insidious evils widespread

Today we face insidious, devastating evils that are widespread. Aimed especially at the destruction of America—the last great bastion of freedom—with emphasis on our youth, the evils are everywhere, sponsored, promoted, and directed by the Communist conspiracy, fellow travelers, and dupes. Never has evil been presented in such an array of appealing forms. We face a most dangerous revolution in America, and it is now in progress. According to the FBI, "It is well-planned, well-financed, and well-armed." As citizens of the greatest nation in the world, we face a deadly serious crisis. We must do battle with these evil forces on every front, now. Any delay will be disastrous. "We must begin aggression against evil. The time for procrastination and permissiveness is long past."

These atrocious, destructive evils are now revealed in our music, in our art, in sex perversion and so-called sex education in the schools, in destructive sensitivity training—a powerful form of Pavlovian brainwashing, as used by Communists on captured American servicemen in Korea and by Hitler in Nazi Germany.

These evils are prominent in the promotion of drugs—LSD, marijuana, and a host of others—in leading magazines and underground publications for youth; in TV, movie, and radio programs, in pornographic literature, in morally destructive paperback books available to all on newsstands, and in Communist-oriented anti-American organizations, such as SDS (Students for a Democratic Society).

These devilish forces "led generally

by dirty minds in dirty bodies," seem to be everywhere. They are spreading into every segment of our social, economic, and religious life—all aimed at the destruction of one whole generation of our choice youth in preparation for the Communist take-over.

The godless Communists have declared, "We are going to destroy the moral character of a generation of young Americans, and when we have finished you will have nothing with which to really defend yourself against us."

Courageous action needed

We may, as adults, close our eyes to them and keep our heads in the sand, hoping they will go away; but these evils are here, close by, working insidiously and destructively day by day, hour by hour, without ceasing. Will parents who have abandoned their responsibilities for the training and guidance of their children awaken and act before it is too late?

We may cry, "peaceful coexistence," but there is no such thing with the devil and his emissaries. We are at war—not a cold war, but a burning, searing hot war, the most serious war in the memory of man. We must win this war now. Will parents bestir themselves before it is too late? Will our political leaders really awaken to the danger? Will courageous action come before destruction falls? Will we as citizens rally prayerfully and actively to courageous leadership?

Eternal verities

The Christian world—the real Christian world—knows that there are certain eternal verities, principles, that never change. Jesus Christ is in very deed "the way, the truth, and the life." The Ten Commandments are verily true. They form a permanently binding code of conduct that man cannot violate without drastic damage to both his material and his spiritual welfare. We know that God is not dead—that he is watching us—even though one of the Russian astronauts cracked: "We've been all over 'heaven' and we didn't see any sign of God."

Yes, godless forces do threaten our

great civilization. These godless forces are forging a union of state and atheism. I quote in substance from the well-known constitutional lawyer, Dean Clarence E. Manion (see Manion Forum Broadcast 747, January 26, 1969):

Astronauts' praise of God

Can you name the three kings who came out of the East bearing gifts for the Infant Jesus? St. Matthew called them the Three Wise Men of the Year One A.D. A few months ago a national magazine called the Apollo 8 Astronauts the Three Men of the Year 1968. But by whatever name they are called, these six famous men are now forever joined across the centuries by their colorful execution of the same high purpose. All of them followed their stars from the end of their earth to praise and glorify God.

The miracle for St. Matthew's men was the unerring accuracy of the Star of Bethlehem, which guided them to their divine destination. The wonder of the world for 1968 was the apparent common faith, wisdom, humility, and, last but not least, the moral courage of Colonel Borman, Captain Lovell, and Major Anders, who, on Christmas Day, at the apex of history's then longest and most perilous voyage, gave praise and thanks to God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and implored his blessing upon all of the three billion listening people of this world.

When all of the facts, figures, and findings of the first incredible journey to the moon are finally evaluated and computerized, this unscheduled, unprecedented public act of religious faith and worship will be found, like the name of Abou Ben Adhem, to lead all the rest for all the years to come. Without the blessings of the Lord, all this would be quite impossible.

War against religion

Those professed atheists, who have confidently relied upon science to dethrone and eclipse Almighty God, are already doing their manful best, of course, to rub out all reference to the prayer in their recapitulation and

evaluation of Apollo 8. The monitoring Communists in Moscow decided wisely to ignore it. But some others are unable to restrain their indignation and have probably been back to the United States Supreme Court seeking the same kind of prohibition against the public glorification of God in the heavens that they have so successfully maintained here on earth.

The justices may or may not welcome this new opportunity to reenforce their strange new doctrine of neutrality in the weird war that is being fronted against God and religion. Undoubtedly, the Court's ultimate decision will be influenced by what happens to the attitude of the American people in the meantime. For the real question now is this: How much longer will the American people—the whole Christian world—continue to tolerate the sadistic beating that religion has been taking in this country and elsewhere for the past 25 years?

Strategy of godless forces

Frankly recognizing that godless forces in this country have always been overwhelmingly outnumbered by the faithful, the first working principle of the anti-God strategists has been to move insidiously and always carefully to avoid anything that resembles a direct attack or a frontal confrontation with their opponents.

So in launching their campaign against God, the attackers proceeded first to ignore him in the secular press; second, to humanize him in the churches; third, to clobber him with ridicule on the campus; and, finally, to induce the courts to enforce official governmental neutrality in all litigated controversies about God and religion.

From a practical standpoint, of course, these decisions establish a union of state and atheism. The accomplishment of this last objective has taken prayer out of the public schools; and if and when the judicial conclusion is extended to its logical limits, it will abolish tax exemption for church property, eliminate chaplains from the armed services, remove our motto "In God we trust" from our coins, and

require major surgery upon our official salute to the flag.

We must realize that the anti-prayer decisions are simply a beguiling climax in the wide-ranging campaign against God and religion that has been sustained here in this country, and in many other nations, for more than three decades.

Recognition of Russia

It was boldly begun here in 1933 (November 16), when the United States announced our diplomatic recognition of atheistic Soviet Russia. For 15 years the United States had refused to recognize the godless Moscow Communists, for the reasons published at length in 1920 by Bainbridge Colby, Secretary of State in the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. In concluding his long letter of documentation and explanation, Colby had said this: "There cannot be any common ground upon which the Government of the United States can stand with a power whose conceptions are so entirely alien to our own, so utterly repugnant to our moral sense."

This recognition, together with the abandonment of the inspired Monroe Doctrine, gave the Red atheists a big diplomatic sanctuary for the coordination and direction of their propagandist spies and saboteurs. These promptly infiltrated every branch of our federal government and later every segment of our economy, and more recently have established a godless base 90 miles from our shores. Our recognition broke the ice of American resistance to the acceptance of the Kremlin gangsters into the international community as a legitimate government and so strengthened their iron grip upon the tortured people of Russia and her satellites.

Works of atheism

Judging by its demoralized works, atheism has now quit advancing in this country simply because it has arrived. Not just rhetorically but actually—our country is in an ungodly mess. City streets are terrorized by crime; our biggest and most expensive campuses are paralyzed by nihilism and anarchy; with special license from the Supreme

Court, theaters are boldly featuring sex perversion and the newsstands are loaded with hard-core pornography. Big-name investigating commissions have told us all about riots, crime, progress, and poverty, but always in materialistic terms of money, housing, social service jobs, and birth control—without a word about the possibilities for personal moral self-restraint.

What about our churches? You have heard the startling story of what scientific atheism has done to institutional religion in the United States and elsewhere.

America's belief in God

But if atheism has taken over, then who and where are the atheists? It was sheer coincidence, of course, that the day after the 1968 astronauts gave us their inspiring prayer from the moon, the Gallup Poll reported that 98 percent of the American people believe in God. Fantastic? Not at all. How many avowed atheists do you know personally?

Gallup also found that 65 percent of us believe in hell and 60 percent of all Americans believe in the devil. Now just a word to this big majority who believe in the devil. Who, in your opinion, has masterminded this tragic transformation of the official, controlling American mind? The devil? Through Satan's communistic counterfeit to the gospel? Then, why don't we all say so?

Now to the 98 percent of us who believe in God: Well, the astronauts did something big about it. Now will you please do a little something about it when you get your next captive audience, however small it is?

Organized atheism, representing just two percent of our population, has contaminated—is still contaminating—the whole course of American life, of Christian life everywhere. In this country today a two percent tail is wagging the big 98 percent dog. Never in all history have so many been hornswoggled by so few.

Start working and praying

For years we have all been obsessed with the iniquities of the Supreme

Court. The way to do something about the Supreme Court is for the 98 percent of us to become obsessed with the omnipotent goodness of the Supreme Being. What do you suppose would happen in all branches of our government if the 98 percent of us would stop complaining and start working and praying?

We Americans have come almost a year with a new national administration in the United States. The world is watching. Perhaps now is the time to return to basic eternal concepts, to praise the Lord while we continue to work hard on the Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court.

Other nations might well follow a similar pattern of concern.

As Americans—as members of the worldwide Christian community—we can defeat the godless, atheistic forces that threaten us. Yes, with the help of Almighty God we can—we must—win the war against the evil forces which seem almost to overwhelm us. The eternal verities revealed from God, through his inspired prophets, have not and will not change.

Let us "put on the whole armour of God, that [we] may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." There is no other way of safety.

God is not dead. He lives, for he has appeared—together with his Beloved Son Jesus Christ—in our day. This I know, as I know that I live, and I bear this humble witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

Following Brother Benson's address, the Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "Fight the Good Fight."

President Hugh B. Brown

We wish to express sincere appreciation for the incomparable renditions of the Tabernacle Choir.

We are grateful for the warm response from the managers and operators of over 300 television and radio stations in offering their facilities as a public service to make the proceedings of this conference available to millions throughout many areas of the world.