

## President Tanner

For the benefit of the television and radio audiences who have just joined us, we are gathered in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah.

We shall now hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

## ELDER HOWARD W. HUNTER

### Of the Council of the Twelve

● Not long ago one of our national publications reported an extensive study of some conditions plaguing our modern society, conditions which give us great concern. Crimes of violence are increasing at an alarming rate. There is disrespect for law and order, civil disobedience, expanded use of drugs and barbituates, increase in venereal diseases, and an accelerating divorce rate. The upward trend in petty thefts, burglary, gambling, riots on school campuses, and protests against standards which have long prevailed as acceptable is alarming.

### Faith in fellowmen

Can we say that because news media are filled with such accounts, there is a universal and basic social change in thinking and conduct? Can we believe that because there are some who have no regard for the law or the rights of others, or who advocate a new morality, this represents a new concept of right and wrong? Although we cannot hide our heads in the sand and disregard present-day problems, I for one have not lost faith in my fellowmen.

Among our modern campus youth are some who take great delight in attracting attention by pursuing a course against the conventional. By a misguided sense of direction, this vocal minority often campaigns for a new freedom disassociated from any sense of responsibility. For every one of these there are thousands of young people who want to live right and do right. They have the desire to take their place in a responsible society and to live under a code of high morality. We are proud of them. These are the great hope of the future. I only wish

their good works and their aspirations could receive the same "equal time" as is allotted to those of opposing political philosophies.

### A sense of right and wrong

What makes the difference? What causes persons to travel divergent courses on moral issues? Is it because of a difference in belief as to whether or not a thing is right or wrong, or is it a total disregard for the right?

We teach little children the difference between right and wrong, and a conscience awakens in them. There seems to be in each of God's children this monitoring device we call a conscience, which tracks our thoughts and actions and raises a caution when there is contemplation of the improper, unconventional, or immoral. Merely living with other people teaches us the difference between right and wrong. There is something lacking in the experience of an adult who must be taken into custody and punished or restrained for violating the rights of others. But again, these people are a small minority. I think we would agree that most people have a real sense of right and wrong and a sincere desire to follow the right. They have an understanding of moral responsibility. Sometimes we refer to this as ethics, the science of moral duty or ideal human character.

### A code of ethics

I believe most persons follow a strict code of ethics. They are governed by this great ethical rule: So live as to invoke the best in others and therefore in yourself. Surely this is commendable and would enhance relationships

in our complex society if everyone had a sincere feeling of such moral responsibility.

Ethical theory is the basis for righteous government and for the formulation of fair and equitable jurisprudence. It is the basis for all moral, social, and economic systems.

We would agree that to follow a strict code of moral ethics, society would reach a high state of perfection and many of the present-day problems would be solved, but is ethics alone sufficient to attain our goals in life? To those who have no belief in life after mortality, ethics may be sufficient to fulfill the requirements of conduct and responsibility. There may be some who believe in a life hereafter, yet feel that ethics is sufficient for salvation. Can this be true without also living the other commandments of God?

### Meaning of true religion

There is a great difference between ethics and religion. There is a distinction between one whose life is based on mere ethics and one who lives a truly religious life. We have a need for ethics, but true religion includes the truths of ethics and goes far beyond. True religion has its roots in the belief in a supreme being. Christian religion is based upon a belief in God the Eternal Father and in his Son Jesus Christ and in the word of the Lord as contained in scripture. Religion also goes beyond theology. It is more than just a belief in Deity; it is the practice of the belief. James E. Talmage said, "One may be deeply versed in theological lore, and yet be lacking in religious and even moral character. If theology be theory then religion is practice; if theology be precept, religion is example." (*Articles of Faith*, p. 5.)

True religion to the Christian is demonstrated by a real belief in God and the realization that we are responsible to him for our acts and conduct. A person who lives such religion is willing to live the principles of the gospel of Christ and walk uprightly before the Lord in all things according to his revealed law. This brings to a man or a woman a sense of peace

and freedom from confusion in life and gives an assurance of eternal life hereafter. The Lord said, ". . . Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4.) A code of morals is not wholly sufficient. For the same reason man cannot be saved by bread alone, he cannot be saved by a code of ethics.

### Religion a vibrant influence

In order to be effective in one's life, religion must be a vibrant influence. It must be an influence that becomes a part of one's thinking and conduct. There is purpose in man's sojourn in mortality. He is placed here for a definite reason, in accordance with God's great plan. We read in Genesis the story of the creation: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. . . ." (Gen. 3:22.)

To learn the difference between good and evil is one of the great purposes for man to have mortal life, yet he is given his freedom of choice with the promise of eternal blessings if he obeys the laws of God.

A true religious faith teaches us that there are certain principles that must be accepted and obeyed. We must have faith in God the Eternal Father and in his Son Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice. This must be followed by repentance from all sin, then baptism by immersion after the example of the Savior by one having authority, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Other things are necessary, including a contrite spirit, a humble heart, obedience to the ordinances and principles of the gospel, and faithfulness to the end. This encompasses the choosing of right over wrong, following good, and abstaining from evil.

### Church restored in latter days

Ethics alone will not accomplish all these things for us, but an active religion will add to ethics the principles and ordinances of the gospel, which, if obeyed, will open the doors of eternal salvation, provided such religion is ordained of God and not of man's

creation. I bear witness to you that the Church established by Christ and taken from the earth because of the apostasy of men has been restored in these latter days in the same manner as foretold by the prophets of old and by the other statements of scripture; that God has spoken to his servants in our day and is now speaking. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invites all persons to listen to the story of the restoration of the gospel, the story of a religion vibrant and vital in the lives of thousands of persons of faith, testimony, and devotion to the principles of the gospel taught by the Church of Christ.

### Peace from living gospel

The troubles of the world often expressed in screaming headlines should remind us to seek for the peace that comes from living the simple principles of the gospel of Christ. The vociferous minorities will not unsettle our peace of soul if we love our fellowmen and have faith in the atoning

sacrifice of the Savior and the quiet assurance he gives of life everlasting. Where do we find such faith in a troubled world? The Lord said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Luke 11:9-10.)

It is my humble and sincere testimony to you that God does truly live—a kind, loving Father. I know that his Son Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, and that through belief in him and keeping his commandments we will have life everlasting. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

### President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us.

## ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY

### Of the Council of the Twelve

● I supposed you have heard the story of the absent-minded professor who went shopping and lost his umbrella. Discovering his loss, he retraced his steps. At the first three stores on which he called, the clerks denied having found his umbrella. At the fourth store the clerk handed him the missing umbrella. He grumbled, "Thank goodness for an honest man. The other three told me they didn't have it."

I am inclined to think that notwithstanding the gains we see in the work of the Lord, notwithstanding the reformation we see in the lives of many people, we are prone to emphasize the problems and disregard the progress.

### Optimism concerning Lord's work

I stand here today as an optimist concerning the work of the Lord. I cannot believe that God has established his work in the earth to have it

fail. I cannot believe that it is getting weaker. I know that it is getting stronger. I realize, of course, that we are beset with many tragic problems. I am a newspaper reader, and I have seen a good deal of this earth. I have seen its rot and smelled its filth. I have been in areas where war rages and hate smolders in the hearts of people. I have seen the appalling poverty that hovers over many lands. I have seen the oppression of those in bondage and the brutality of their overlords. I know something of the misguided youth whose appearance is repugnant, whose hygiene is repulsive, whose manners are disgusting. I have watched with alarm the crumbling morals of our society.

And yet I am an optimist. I have a simple and solemn faith that right will triumph and that truth will prevail. I am not so naive as to believe there will not be setbacks, but I believe that "truth crushed to earth will rise again."