

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."

"Be not afraid, only believe"

When I left for a mission some 36 years ago, my good father handed me a card on which were written five words. They were the words of the Lord to the ruler of the synagogue who had received news of his daughter's death: "Be not afraid, only believe." (Mark 5:36.) If the Lord will inspire me, I should like to express a few thoughts on that theme.

Kingdom to stand forever

I believe in the triumph of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the triumph of the Church and kingdom of God on the earth. If ever your faith is inclined to weaken as you see the onward march of evil and oppression, read again the story of Daniel who, putting his trust in the "God in heaven that revealeth secrets," interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream. He said concerning our day that the God of heaven shall "set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these [other] kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Dan. 2:44.)

I believe, my friends, that the cause we have the honor to represent is that kingdom which shall stand forever.

I am not engaging in unrealistic dreams when I think of its future, for every day I see the miracle of its strength and of its growing influence in the lives of thousands across the earth. It is not a great impersonal juggernaut of power. It finds its best expression in the quiet of the lives of those who have embraced it.

I do not want to boast. Heaven knows we have problems among us. We are far from perfection. And yet I have seen so much of good that my faith constantly strengthens.

Belief in youth

I believe in our youth. I believe in their goodness and decency. I believe in their virtue. I have interviewed thousands of them on a personal and individual basis. Yes, there are some who have succumbed to evil, but they are a minority.

On a visit to South Vietnam three years ago, I talked individually with two or three hundred men—men who had waded through the blood and heat of battle, but men who were virtuous in their lives. I remember one of them, a boy who had just come down from the Rock Pile near the DMZ, who said in response to a question on morality: "Not on your life—I couldn't do that. I want to be worthy of a great girl some day."

Service of missionaries

I believe in their sense of service. I have just been down in South America, where we have some 1,500 of the 13,000 missionaries of this church. Like their associates over the world, they are there entirely at their own expense and at the expense of their families. They give to the Lord two years of their lives. Their days are long, their weeks crowded and arduous. They speak with a persuasive conviction. They bear testimony of the living Christ and of the virtues of his marvelous work.

May I read from a letter received from one of them: "The most effective technique we have found in our work is fasting and prayer. We saw how this worked a few weeks ago with an investigator of the Church. He had a number of questions and problems to overcome, and we just didn't seem to get anywhere when we met with him to discuss them. So we would go home to our apartment and ask the Lord to bless him and help him understand what we had explained to him. We felt it was very important that he be baptized, so we asked the Lord to bless him with a desire for baptism. Even up through the sixth lesson he was wavering, so we fasted the day before his baptism, and he has been a faithful member ever since."

One thinks of the words of the Lord to his disciples who complained they could not perform miracles. Said he: ". . . this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (Matt. 17:21.)

Miracle of devotion

Is it not a miracle in itself that in this day of doubt and disbelief young

men, thousands of them, with lives to live and careers to build, spend two years in the service of the Lord, laboring constantly and even willing to fast and pray in behalf of those to whom they seek to teach a better life? I know of no experience more refreshing than to be with them and feel of their spirit. If any of you who are listening this day should have two of them come to your door, I hope that you will welcome them and hear them. They will restore your faith in youth. They will quicken your faith in the Lord. They will lead you to a joy you have never previously known.

I believe they are the best generation that ever lived. In Montevideo the other day I interviewed 154 of them. I asked them about their parents and about their homes. I discovered that 58 of them, or more than one-third, came from homes where parents did not belong to the Church or did nothing in the Church. While the sample may be too small from which to draw a reliable conclusion, my observation and experience would indicate that the youth I know and love are better than their parents.

Appreciation for parents

And I believe in something else that is a barometer of their goodness. Paul warned that in the last days men would be unthankful, unholy, disobedient to parents, without natural affection. (See 2 Tim. 3:1-3.) One need not look far in the homes of the people to see that prophecy being fulfilled. And yet I have recently witnessed a repudiation of that insofar as many are concerned. In my visit to South America I heard hundreds of our young men and women stand on their feet and express their feelings. Almost without exception they spoke words of appreciation, of thankfulness for their parents. What a remarkably refreshing thing it is to hear young men and women, 19, 20, 21, and 22 years of age, stand before one another and, in the quiet confidences of such a meeting, say, "I really appreciate my dad." "I love my mother." They are not maudlin; they are manly, athletic, able young men and womanly girls of

charm and education. Their words come from the heart. Those sentiments in this day are as a cool and refreshing breeze on a hot and humid night.

Enthusiasm of converts

One hears much these days about the slow death of the churches, and yet the Lord declared that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached . . . for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14.) Can it possibly be accomplished? I recently had an insight into that possibility.

When I was in South America I met a woman. She had just joined the Church. She was introduced as a new convert to the Church. Fired by a great love for that which she had found, she has gone about enthusiastically telling others. During a period of only seven months since her baptism, she has referred 300 acquaintances to the missionaries so that they might explain the gospel to them. Of these, 60 have come into the Church and are solid members, and more will yet come. In Sao Paulo, Brazil, I recently met the young missionary who first had taught her the gospel. He too had been a convert, had gone on a mission to represent the Church at considerable financial sacrifice; and the woman of whom I speak was one of 43 he had brought into the Church, so this young man of Brazil had expanded himself more than 100 times—43 converts of his own and 60 through one of those he converted, with perhaps more from others of his converts yet to come.

Work requires faith

Yes, this work requires sacrifice, it requires effort, it means courage to speak out and faith to try. This cause does not need critics; it does not need doubters. It needs men and women of solemn purpose. As Paul wrote to Timothy: ". . . God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. . . ." (2 Tim. 1:7-8.)

I would that every member of this church, and every good man through-

out the world, would put those words where he might see them every morning as he begins his day. They would give him the courage to speak up, they would give him the faith to try, they would strengthen his conviction of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that miracles would begin to happen over the earth.

The words of eternal life

I recall the occasion on which Jesus fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes. They were satisfied physically and were curious. He then taught them the doctrines of the kingdom and many fell away. "Then said Jesus unto the Twelve, will ye also go away?"

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6:67-69.)

I echo that testimony, my brethren. I know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that this is their holy work, and I plead with you and with the God of heaven that we shall have the power and the faith and the devotion to roll it forward to its great destiny, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "To Music," after which Brother Mark E. Petersen will be our concluding speaker.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "To Music."

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve

● Earnestly I pray for the direction of the eternal Spirit of God as I stand before you and bear you my testimony that I know that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is true.

From its beginning, true Christianity has been a religion that has been hard to believe and hard for most people to live.

When the Savior was on earth and taught his pure doctrine, many refused to listen to him. Some were offended by what he said and became so angry that they sought his life, and eventually they crucified him.

Following his ascension into heaven, his disciples endeavored to carry on his work, but they also were misunderstood, disbelieved by most, and severely persecuted.

As the scriptures indicate, they were everywhere spoken against. It was largely because their teachings were so hard to believe.

Doctrines challenged traditions

The doctrine which first challenged

the credulity of the people was the teaching that Christ was the Son of the living God. This led his critics to call him a blasphemer.

When he exhibited his divine power in healing the sick and giving sight to the blind, they called him Beelzebub and said he was of the devil.

These reactions to his labors were quite understandable, and in a way the people generally were hardly to blame. Jesus himself prayed at the crucifixion, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

The doctrines of Christ were quite different from what they had been taught all their lives, and therefore, under the influence of their time-honored tradition, they felt that what Jesus said was false.

And yet, the scriptures that they professed to love and read had foretold his coming. They even described his person and predicted his eventual sacrifice. But the scriptures were misconstrued by the elders and the scribes,