

President Joseph Fielding Smith

● My beloved brethren and sisters: I am grateful beyond any measure of expression for the blessings the Lord has given to me, and to the faithful members of his church in the various nations of the earth, and to all his children everywhere.

I thank him every day of my life that he has restored in these last days his everlasting gospel for the salvation of all who will believe and obey its laws.

President David O. McKay

I thank him for the life and ministry of each of the good and great men whom he has called to govern and direct the affairs of his latter-day kingdom.

May I say in particular how much we miss President David O. McKay. As we all know, he was a man of great spiritual strength, a natural-born leader of men, and a man beloved by his people and honored by the world. For all time to come men shall rise up and call his name blessed.

President McKay reminded us often that our mission is to all the world—for the peace, and hope, and happiness, and temporal and eternal salvation of all of our Father's children.

He extended educational opportunities to many peoples in many countries—to Hawaii, the South Pacific, Latin America, and widely among the American Indians. In his remarkable and wide-ranging administration, he sought to bless the people of all the world, so far as possible.

And I say to you, my beloved brethren and sisters, that I know the Lord was pleased with the broad, far-seeing administration of President McKay, and with all my powers of persuasion I urge this people to continue to reach out and bless the lives of all our Father's children everywhere.

Relationship of good will

May I say how pleased we are as a people for the increased understanding

and for the kindly relationship which we enjoy with other faiths, and I trust and pray that this wholesome relationship of goodwill and Christian fellowship will increase and will bless the lives of all who are touched by it.

I think if all men knew and understood who they are, and were aware of the divine source from whence they came, and of the infinite potential that is part of their inheritance, they would have feelings of kindness and kinship for each other that would change their whole way of living and bring peace on earth.

Divine origin of man

We believe in the dignity and divine origin of man. Our faith is founded on the fact that God is our Father, and that we are his children, and that all men are brothers and sisters in the same eternal family.

As members of his family, we dwelt with him before the foundations of this earth were laid, and he ordained and established the plan of salvation whereby we gained the privilege of advancing and progressing as we are endeavoring to do.

The God we worship is a glorified Being in whom all power and perfection dwell, and he has created man in his own image and likeness, with those characteristics and attributes which he himself possesses.

And so our belief in the dignity and destiny of man is an essential part both of our theology and of our way of life. It is the very basis of our Lord's teaching that "the first and great commandment" is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; and that the second great commandment is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (See Matt. 22:37-39.)

Love of God and fellowmen

Because God is our Father, we have a natural desire to love and serve him and to be worthy members of his fam-

ily. We feel an obligation to do what he would have us do, to keep his commandments and live in harmony with the standards of his gospel—all of which are essential parts of true worship.

And because all men are our brothers, we have a desire to love and bless and fellowship them—and this too we accept as an essential part of true worship.

Thus everything we do in the Church centers around the divine law that we are to love and worship God and serve our fellowmen.

It is no wonder, then, that as a church and as a people we have deep and abiding concern for the welfare of all our Father's children. We seek their temporal and spiritual well-being along with our own. We pray for them as we do for ourselves, and we try to live so that they, seeing our good works, may be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

Engaged in a good cause

As a church, we are pleased to commend and encourage every civic and cultural project or undertaking that is edifying and wholesome and that is for the blessing and betterment of mankind.

One of our Articles of Faith declares: "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men. . . . If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." (Article 13.)

And one of the revelations the Lord has given counsels that "men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness." (D&C 58:27.)

Social trends

We look with firm disfavor upon some of the social and cultural trends that have existed and do exist in our society, and firmly believe that all decisions on moral issues should be in harmony with the standards found in the Holy Scriptures, beginning with the

Old Testament and including the other volumes of revealed writ that God has given in succeeding dispensations.

One of these divine standards states: "And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness." (D&C 50:23.) As a people we seek for ourselves and for all mankind only those things which are edifying, enlightening, uplifting, and ennobling.

Spirit of disruption

We believe it is essential that our young people gain sufficient education to care for themselves in this highly specialized age, and also to serve their fellowmen, and we have in the past and shall continue in the future to support education at all levels.

We have little sympathy, however, with the spirit of disruption and dissidence that is sometimes found on the campuses of the land. We urge our youth to avoid these displays of in-temperate conduct and rather to be found on the side of law and order and circumspect action.

It is our hope and prayer that in all nations men may live in peace, respecting each other's beliefs and forms of worship, and that the spirit of unity and brotherhood may abound on every side.

We know there are many people who seek to live upright lives and who desire to maintain substantially the same standards to which we adhere. We welcome their encouragement and hope they will feel to accept the hand of Christian fellowship from us, as all of us seek those great goals so basic to true worship and unity.

Welfare of youth

We have great concern for the spiritual and moral welfare of all youth everywhere. Morality, chastity, virtue, freedom from sin—these are and must be basic to our way of life, if we are to realize its full purpose.

We plead with fathers and mothers to teach personal purity by precept and example and to counsel with their children in all such things.

We ask parents to set an example of righteousness in their own lives and to gather their children around them and teach them the gospel, in their home evenings and at other times.

We have confidence in the young and rising generation in the Church and plead with them not to follow the fashions and customs of the world, not to partake of a spirit of rebellion, not to forsake the paths of truth and virtue. We believe in their fundamental goodness and expect them to become pillars of righteousness and to carry on the work of the Church with increasing faith and effectiveness.

Our young people are among the most blessed and favored of our Father's children. They are the nobility of heaven, a choice and chosen generation who have a divine destiny. Their spirits have been reserved to come forth in this day when the gospel is on earth, and when the Lord needs valiant servants to carry on his great latter-day work.

May the Lord bless you, the youth of Zion, and keep you true to every covenant and obligation, cause you to walk in paths of light and truth, and preserve you for the great labors ahead.

There has never been a time, in this age of the earth's history, at least, when the blessings of a gracious and loving Father were as much needed by all men as they are now.

Prayer for divine blessings

And so now I pray that God our Heavenly Father will open the windows of heaven and pour out upon his children in all the earth those great and eternal blessings which will better their lot temporally and spiritually.

O that men might forsake the ways of the world and turn to that God who made them!

O that they might open their hearts and receive the words of truth and light found in the gospel of his Son!

O that there might be peace on earth, brotherhood among nations, and love in the hearts of men!

I pray that God our Eternal Father

will look down in love and mercy upon his people everywhere, and upon all those who have chosen him as their God and who seek to serve him in the name of his Son.

I pray that parents everywhere may be a light unto their children; that they may guide them in paths of truth and righteousness; and that children may respond to parental teaching and be preserved from the evils of the world.

I pray for the weak and the weary, for those who are burdened with cares and sorrows, for those who need comfort and assurance amid the storms of life.

May the Lord grant unto them peace according to the promise of his Son, who said to the saints in olden times: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.)

May the Lord grant unto us and to all men the fullness of those blessings which we are able to receive in this life and then accept us into his kingdom in the eternities that lie ahead—all of which I pray in humility and in thanksgiving and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Harold B. Lee

For the benefit of the television and radio audience who have just joined with us we announce that we are gathered in the historic Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square in this the first session of the 140th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. President Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Church, has just spoken to us.

The Tabernacle Choir, with Richard P. Condie directing and Alexander Schreiner at the organ, will sing "Sing Unto God." Following the singing, Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will speak to us.