

Would it not be wise to examine our practices to see which road we are walking? Is *our* word as good as *our* bond? Are we honest in our dealings with others, even in little things?

### Leaders of righteousness

Just because we Latter-day Saints live in a current world characterized by sharp and dishonest practices is no excuse for us to be untrustworthy. Because others lie is no excuse for us to be dishonest. On the contrary, we must be leaders of righteousness so that others may know the paths of honesty and righteousness that lead back into the presence of God the Eternal Father. The power of the priesthood is given us to lead. Those who bear that priesthood must be pillars of honesty and virtue in every sense of the word. The apostle Peter spoke to priesthood leaders in this way:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Pet. 2:9, 11-12.)

### Honoring the royal name we bear

As the children of God, our lives must be filled with good works, honest practices, and honest virtues that are characteristic of the children of God.

When we take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, we bear the responsibility of guarding that great name with our very lives.

To fail to honor that royal name we bear as Christians is to hold the very God we espouse to open ridicule and shame. In effect, we crucify him anew before the world.

Now we know these things are true. Like Amulek of old we know better, but often we won't listen. As Amulek said:

". . . I did harden my heart, for I was called many times and I would not hear; therefore I knew concerning these things, yet I would not know; therefore I went on rebelling against God, in the wickedness of my heart. . . ." (Al. 10:6. Italics added.)

You know as I know that the ways of God will not fail. His purposes will be accomplished and he will save us from our sins if only we will not harden our hearts.

This is God's work. We are God's children and must not fail him. Let us all then obey those teachings which we know deep down in our hearts are true. It is time to remember that Jesus truly is the Christ, the living Son of the living God. He is the Redeemer and Savior of this world. Of the divinity of his teachings and the rightness of his cause I bear my personal witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

### President Joseph Fielding Smith

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder James A. Cullimore, one of the Assistants to the Twelve.

## Elder Alma Sonne

### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

#### ● My brethren and sisters:

A few years ago I boarded an ocean liner in Liverpool, England. On board was a group of missionaries, returning home after serving two years or more in

the missions of Europe. I noticed one of these men standing on the upper deck, looking to the eastward. He seemed a bit crestfallen. As I approached him, I said, "Are you home-

sick for the mission field?" "Well, not exactly," he said, "but it has suddenly occurred to me that I may never see those people again."

He had spent two and one-half years in Norway. He had made many friends, and many of them had befriended and cared for him during his period of missionary service. To leave them was an ordeal that he had not contemplated. "I may never see them again, and today my heart is over there," he said.

It is a common experience with missionaries who invariably have strong attachments to the people among whom they have labored.

### **Benefits of missionary service**

The Church has moved ahead since its organization in 1830. Its program has been constructive and far-reaching. The missionary spirit is still strong in its members. Most young men and many young women look forward to a missionary opportunity. They know the benefits derived from such service.

The greatest project ever launched by the Savior was when he sent his chosen apostles into the world with the injunction, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel of the kingdom to every creature.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16.)

It was a gigantic task, requiring faith, courage, and conviction.

I need not tell you that their labors were effective. What they said and did revolutionized the world. Before many centuries had passed, the name of Jesus Christ was known all over the civilized world. Churches, cathedrals, and monuments were erected to preserve and honor his memory. A confusion, however, had arisen in these Christian churches. There were many sects, each one claiming to have the right way to salvation. There was a lack of unity and purpose.

### **Obligation to teach restored gospel**

In the blaze of the nineteenth century, Joseph Smith appeared. He

claimed that the churches called Christian had broken the laws and changed the everlasting gospel. This was in fulfillment of prophecy. The obligation resting upon the Latter-day Saints is to teach the restored gospel. I feel I can conscientiously and truthfully say that the restored Church is discharging this great responsibility. Within a year after its organization missionaries were in the field, often without purse or scrip, announcing the restoration of divine truth. Their success was phenomenal. The Church grew and prospered through a missionary system that has no parallel in religious history.

Foreign countries were visited. Opposition mounted. In some cases mobs assembled. Newspapers carried on tirades of abuse. Persecution raged; even churches were hostile. But the young church, organized under God's direction, grew and prospered and finally moved to the Rocky Mountains, as prophesied by the Prophet Joseph Smith; and the work of regeneration was on its way.

### **Work moving forward**

The Church is well organized and equipped to carry on its mission to the world. Generally speaking, it has been successful, and the gospel of the kingdom is going forth in preparation for Christ's coming in these the last days. Many barriers have been removed since those hard times when it was first introduced under the leadership of Joseph Smith, a young prophet.

When God has a message for his children on the earth, a prophet is chosen and authorized to deliver that message. In the eyes of God he is a great man, a true servant, but before men, he is often an outcast, persecuted, maligned, and misunderstood. He is often a victim of abuse and falsehood, but he is unconquerable as he faces the forces of opposition.

The modern prophet, Joseph Smith, was no exception. The powers of evil were arrayed against him. He withstood them and did the work assigned him.

He could not fail, for the hour had come when the God of heaven

and earth would establish his work to redeem humanity. That work is moving forward, brethren and sisters, and will continue its onward march until it has filled the earth, and nothing can stay its progress.

I so testify in great humility, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Amen. ○

### Elder James A. Cullimore

#### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

● My beloved brethren and sisters: How wonderful it is to be assembled here with you in this great worldwide general conference of the Church. As I note the various representatives of stakes from all over the world, I sense more than ever how completely this is a worldwide church. I am grateful to be here and to represent you in whatever way I might, and to be of service in this great church.

#### The covenants we make

Some of the facts that come to our attention in the line of our duty make me wonder if we take as seriously as we should the covenants we have made as members of the Church:

—The covenants made in baptism—wherein we “witness before the church that [we] have truly repented of all . . . sins, and are willing to take upon [us] the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by [our] works that [we] have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of . . . sins.” (D&C 20:37.)

—Promises made to our spouse and unto the Lord as we enter into the marriage covenant.

—All covenants made in the temple.

—Promises made to our bishop and stake president, branch president or mission president as we accept assignments to offices in the Church.

—The oath and covenant of the priesthood. The obligations we accept as we are ordained to the priesthood and act in its offices.

The Lord expects us to be obedient

### President Joseph Fielding Smith

We have just listened to Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve, who will be our concluding speaker.

to our covenants. Great blessings are promised us as we are obedient, both temporal and spiritual, the greatest of which is eternal life. (D&C 59:23.) Likewise, condemnation follows disobedience. The Lord expects us to be strong and conquering as we exercise our agency.

#### Responsibility of Church members

President McKay said, in reference to our responsibilities as members of the Church: “Membership in the Church carries with it the responsibility to overcome temptation, to battle error, to improve the mind, and to develop one’s spirit until it comes to the ‘measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’ Habits of intemperance and sensual pleasures should have been buried in the waters of baptism. What folly to permit them to return when one realizes that not happiness but misery is allied with indulgence in sin!” (*Man May Know for Himself* [Deseret Book Co., 1967], p. 462.)

As we entered the waters of baptism, we covenanted with the Lord to be obedient and keep his commandments. The Savior set the pattern in this; Nephi told his people the following: “. . . he [the Savior] showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments.

“Wherefore, after he was baptized with water the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove.

“And again, it showeth unto the