

night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." (*Hamlet*, Act 2, sc. 3.)

Being true to ourselves can mean knowing where we are, where we are going and why, and assisting our associates in traveling the right paths with us.

"Doers of the word"

Scriptures such as "be ye doers of the word . . ." (Jas. 1:22), and "But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved . . ." (D&C 45:32) take on new significance as we realize our responsibility to act and not react.

Our Prophet Joseph Smith was a man of action. Torture, belittlement, and all manner of inhumane affliction, including a pending martyr's death, did not halt nor even slow down his life of purposeful action. He acted as one totally committed to "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation. . ." (Rom. 1:16.) He didn't just think about the gospel or react to it; he lived it. He was true to himself and to those principles he valued more than life itself.

Purposeful action

The gospel of Jesus Christ is purposeful action. "Ask," "Seek," "Knock," and "Judge not" and "Love" are words of action, not reaction. Jesus led his fellowmen as a mighty master because "he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matt. 7:29.) Jesus was true to himself and to his Father; and so important to all of us, he was true to us.

How weak the following reaction

philosophies are: "See if your neighbor loves you first before you manifest love toward him." "See if your acquaintance is friendly before you offer your friendship." How powerful the action commandment of "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

I humbly pray that we may be men and women of action, and not let anyone else lead us from his paths. If we follow the teachings of this great gospel of Jesus Christ to the fullest of our ability, it can truthfully be said of us, through our actions also, that we "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52.)

Thrust in sickles

We start to fail in our homes when we give up on a family member. We fail in our positions of leadership when we react by saying, "It's no use, they won't come." "It's no use, they won't respond." Let us thrust in our sickles with all of our might in the fields in which we have been called, and not spend our time reacting to the location or type of crop we have been called to harvest.

I bear witness to you that the gospel of Jesus Christ is an action way of life and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true. May our Heavenly Father help us to actively be about his business I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Joseph Fielding Smith

The next speaker will be Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder James A. Cullimore

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

● My brethren and sisters: How delightful it is to be here today. Sometime ago Brother Guy B. Rose, who is usually present on the front row of these meetings, told me of an inter-

esting experience in his work. He had been a superintendent of schools in the East. One day as he visited one of the classes in a school, the teacher had the students drawing on the board

something that would be representative of Thanksgiving. All were busy completing their sketches, but one child was obviously concerned about what she was to do in completing what she had started. As Brother Rose approached her, he asked if she was having trouble. She said, "Yes. How do you draw God?" She had ably portrayed the mountains, the trees, and the boy kneeling under the trees in an attitude of prayer but was confused as to how to draw God. Brother Rose quickly assured her that God was a man, that he looked much like men on earth, that men are created in the image of God.

Confusion about God

Men everywhere seem to be confused as to what God is like. Strange, incomprehensible concepts of God have been taught apparently to enlighten men, but in their uncertainty they only tend to further confuse men.

The Reverend Harold O. J. Brown, in his book *The Protest of a Troubled Protestant*, expresses his concern over the fact that in many of the pulpits today, ministers are getting away from the strict concepts of the Bible. He said, "People are being converted to the most fanciful cults from the very parishes in which the clergy are unwilling to preach historic Christian doctrine. They fear being thought out-of-date and therefore incredible." (Pp. 20-21.)

Paul's statement

As Paul came to the Athenian saints, he found them worshiping false gods and called them to repentance. He said: ". . . I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

". . . as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." (Acts 17:22-25, 28-30.)

Importance of knowing God

The Savior indicated the great importance of knowing God, as he prayed unto the Father before his crucifixion: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 345-46.)

Nature and character of God

The scriptures are clear as they teach us of God. In the story of the creation as recorded in Genesis, it states: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:26-27.)

Jesus spoke of God as a just and loving Father, dwelling in the heavens. His teachings were explicit as to the nature and character of God the Father. Unto Thomas he said: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth

ye know him, and have seen him." (John 14:7.)

Philip said unto the Lord: "... shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:8-9.)

Paul plainly told the Hebrew saints that Christ was in the image of God. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:1-3.)

"Life eternal" to know God

I believe sincerely that our faith in God, our works of righteousness, and our sincerity of purpose are greatly determined by our concept and understanding of God. If, like the young lady trying to draw God, I can't visualize him, if I don't really know him, how can my faith in him be strong? How can I really pray to someone I don't know?

It is really "life eternal" to know God; that he is a personal being; that he is the Father of our spirits; that we are his children; that he has concern for us; that there is a meaningful plan in which we might regain his presence and have eternal life with him.

The understanding of the nature of God and his Son Jesus Christ was impressed upon the Prophet Joseph Smith in the first vision, in the opening of this dispensation, in which he saw the Father and the Son. Whatever his concept of God might have been, there was now no doubt in his mind as to God and Christ. This understanding was his because he saw them and heard and conversed with them. The

Father spoke to him and introduced the Son. Listen to the words of the Prophet Joseph as he describes his vision: "... When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (Joseph Smith 2:17.)

In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1843, it is declared: "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us." (D&C 130:22.)

Divergent views of God's personality

It is necessary to believe in God as a personal, corporeal being in order to understand that he can reveal himself to man as he did to the Prophet Joseph Smith in open vision. One who doesn't believe in a personal God may also believe in revelation, but it would be the kind of revelation that would be compatible with his concept of God. Brother William E. Berrett made an interesting observation as to the importance of our concept of the nature of God in reference to revelation. He said: "Any discussion of revelation revolves basically around our concept of the nature of God. Unless we conceive God in the same light we never arrive at the same conclusions in regard to revelation."

Brother Berrett illustrates this thought by referring to the viewpoint of a great contemporary thinker in the field of religion, Dr. Henry Wieman, of the University of Chicago.

"Both Dr. Wieman and I," he said, "believe in God, but our concepts are wholly different, for I conceive God as a perfected corporeal personality, while Dr. Wieman would think the idea of a personal God as juvenile, and for himself conceives Him as the sum total of all that is good and progressive in the Universe. To quote his words:

"God is not a personality, but God is more worthful than any personality

could be. God is not nature and He is not the universe; He is the growth of living connections of value in the universe. If one wishes he can say, this is not God but it is the work of God. Practically it comes to the same thing.'"

Elder Berrett continues, "Having divergent views as to the personality of God it follows that we must have divergent views upon the matter of revelation from Him. Both Dr. Wieman and I believe in revelation as a continuous principle of life but when we use that term we are thinking of entirely different things. Dr. Wieman would not accept such a vision as that to Joseph Smith in the grove because it does violence to his concept of God. He would reject the reality of heavenly messengers, and the reality of any direct words from God to man. . . .

"This then is the real nature and place of revelation. It is not a miraculous giving of knowledge. But it is that change in personality which, in one way or another, is required before man can get any knowledge of anything that lies outside the range of his established organization of interest. It is a reorganization of his interests which enables him to know a new kind of reality," (From an address given at LDS Department of Education Regional Convention, November 8, 1941, in William E. Berrett, *Continuous Revelation in the Church*, p. 6.)

Understanding influenced by concept

Not only is it important in our understanding of revelation to know God, but our understanding of all the principles of the gospel are greatly in-

fluenced by our concept of him as a personal, loving Father and of the great plan of salvation that he has provided for all his children. The kind of a God as described by the Prophet Joseph Smith makes me understand him as my literal Father in heaven. He said:

"God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God, who holds this world in its orbit, and who holds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another." (*Documentary History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 305.)

Key to need

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Savior gave us the key as to the need of really knowing the Father when he said: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.)

It is man's purpose in life to learn to know God, to know the nature and kind of being God is, and then to conform to his laws and ordinances; to progress, to be exalted to that high state wherein man becomes perfect as the Father is perfect.

May we be able to do this, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

Elder Loren C. Dunn

Of the First Council of the Seventy

● I remember a story told by a forest ranger about a tourist coming to a national park to take pictures of wildlife. Not far from the campground he found what he was looking for—twin bear

cubs rummaging around in a garbage dump, half playing, half looking for dinner. Grabbing his camera, he proceeded to take a series of pictures from a number of different angles. In his