

Joseph Smith is the great latter-day prophet through whom the knowledge of Christ and of salvation was restored; and that this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in very deed the kingdom of God on earth, the one place where men may come to find peace in this life and become inheritors of eternal glory in the life to come.

We are servants of the Lord, and he has commanded us to proclaim his gospel message to all men. And of that message we now testify that as our Lord and our God liveth, it is true. In

the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

Following Elder McConkie's sermon, the Tabernacle Choir sang the anthem, "O Lord Most Holy."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

Of the Council of the Twelve

● We live in an interesting period of the history of mankind. The slow pace of man's progress from the beginning gradually commenced to accelerate and gain speed. Today we find advancement moving at such increased momentum that we are often frightened by the thoughts of the future. Man takes pride in the rapid strides of science that have created conveniences for his everyday living. His health has been improved by the progress of medicine, and his life-span has been extended. Sweeping reforms in many areas of society have enhanced his well-being. Business and industry are moving forward at a pace never before known, and this generation has the highest standard of living ever enjoyed by man. We are proud to be living in a modern world of achievement.

Progress brings concern

Will all of this spiraling progress be good for man in the years that lie ahead? Will it be beneficial in every respect to our children and grandchildren? We would agree, no doubt, that many things give us concern. What of the future of the family and home life, which in past generations have been great stabilizing forces in society? What of the solidarity of community and national life? What of the future of our economy, as the con-

sequence of inflation and increased debt? What of the modern course of deterioration of morality and its effect upon individuals, families, nations, and the world? We are forced to admit that what we term as progress brings with it many consequences of serious concern.

We are entering into, or going through, a period of history in which so-called modern thought is taking precedence in the minds of many persons who classify themselves as advocates of a modern generation. The more extreme of these lean toward free thinking and free action without assuming the responsibility men owe to fellowmen. Where will we be led if we follow those who advocate freedom of use of drugs and freedom of morality? What will be the result of universal free love, abortions at will, homosexuality, or legalized pornography?

Modern criticism

What of spiritual values and the religious ideals of past generations, which have been the great stabilizing influence on society? Modern thinkers claim these have been the great deterrents to man in the freedoms he now seeks. There is a great effort on the part of so-called modernists to change religious beliefs and teachings of the

past to conform to modern thought and critical research. They de-emphasize the teachings of the Bible by modern critical methods and deny that scripture is inspired. The modernist teaches that Christ is not the Son of God. He denies the doctrine of the atoning sacrifice by which all men may be saved. He denies the fact of the resurrection of the Savior of the world and relegates him to the status of a teacher of ethics. Where, then, is hope? What has become of faith?

The Old Testament unfolds the story of the creation of the earth and man by God. Should we now disregard this account and modernize the creation according to the theories of the modernists? Can we say there was no Garden of Eden or an Adam and Eve? Because modernists now declare the story of the flood is unreasonable and impossible, should we disbelieve the account of Noah and the flood as related in the Old Testament?

Confirmation by the Master

Let us examine what the Master said when the disciples came to him as he sat on the Mount of Olives. They asked him to tell them of the time of his coming and of the end of the world. Jesus answered: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

"And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:36-39.)

In this statement the Master confirmed the story of the flood without modernizing it. Can we accept some of the statements of the Lord as being true and at the same time reject others as being false?

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him

and they discussed the matter of the death of her brother and the resurrection. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." (John 11:25.)

Both of these statements, the one regarding Noah and the fact of the flood and the one in which he declared himself to be the resurrection and the life, were made by the Lord. How can we believe one and not the other? How can we modernize the story of the flood or refer to it as a myth and yet cling to the truth of the other? How can we modernize the Bible and have it be a guiding light to us and a vital influence in our beliefs?

Belief in eternal principles

There are those who declare it is old-fashioned to believe in the Bible. Is it old-fashioned to believe in God, in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God? Is it old-fashioned to believe in his atoning sacrifice and the resurrection? If it is, I declare myself to be old-fashioned and the Church is old-fashioned. In great simplicity the Master taught the principles of life eternal and lessons that bring happiness to those with the faith to believe. It doesn't seem reasonable to assume the necessity of modernizing these teachings of the Master. His message concerned principles that are eternal. Following these principles, millions of persons have found rich religious experiences in their lives. People of today's world are seeking a meaningful purpose in life, and thousands are seeking a religious experience that is meaningful. Can such an experience be found in meditation only, or by a seance? Can a meaningful experience be found in trips with drugs or in love-ins? Such an attempt is to go through the back, the side door, or over the wall, not through the way pointed out by the Lord.

Door into the sheepfold

When the Lord spoke to the Pharisees at the Feast of the Tabernacles, he used these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by

the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." (John 10:1, 7.)

A meaningful religious experience can come in no other way than by that door, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sign-seekers

There have always been those who wanted a sign before they would believe. During his ministry the Master was asked on many occasions for a sign.

"The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

"He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.

"And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. . . ." (Matt. 16:1-4.)

Perhaps it was with them, as with many today, truth is not recognized as truth unless accompanied by the sensational. What would have been accomplished had the Lord called down thunder and lightning, or plucked a star from the sky, or divided the water to satisfy the curiosity of men? They would probably have said it was the work of the devil, or their eyes deceived them.

Great promises of blessings

Signs are evident to the faithful. Sick persons are healed; prayers are answered; changes are wrought in the lives of those who believe, accept, and live the commandments. We prove Christ by living the principles of his gospel. He made great promises of blessings to those who live the commandments: "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.) Many of the command-

ments are restrictive, but reason dictates they are for man's good. In addition to the restrictive commandments are the positive admonitions. The two great imperatives are to love God and love one's fellowmen.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40.)

Love of God and neighbor

What greater laws could be given to bring peace, prosperity, and progress to man if he will faithfully live the commandments to love?

In this time of rapid change, we can maintain an equilibrium if we preserve a belief in God and a love for him, but we cannot love God unless we love his children also. These are our neighbors, and true love of them knows no class or culture, race, color, or creed.

The members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints open their arms to neighbors everywhere. The restored Church of Christ assumes its charge and responsibility to take the gospel of Jesus Christ in love to its neighbors over the world and endeavors to help those who receive the gospel to live the teachings of the Master.

Return to Christ

In this world of confusion and rushing, temporal progress, we need to return to the simplicity of Christ. We need to love, honor, and worship him. To acquire spirituality and have its influence in our lives, we cannot become confused and misdirected by the twisted teachings of the modernist. We need to study the simple fundamentals of the truths taught by the Master and eliminate the controversial. Our faith in God needs to be real and not speculative. The restored gospel of Jesus Christ can be a dynamic, moving in-

fluence, and true acceptance gives us a meaningful, religious experience. One of the great strengths of the Mormon religion is this translation of belief into daily thinking and conduct. This replaces turmoil and confusion with peace and tranquility.

The Church stands firmly against relaxation or change in moral issues and opposes the so-called new morality. Spiritual values cannot be set aside, notwithstanding modernists who would tear them down. We can be modern without giving way to the influence of the modernist. If it is old-fashioned to believe in the Bible, we should thank God for the privilege of being old-fashioned.

Personal conviction

Permit me to conclude with my personal conviction and testimony. I know God lives, the same God described in the Old and the New Testaments. I know Jesus Christ is his Son. He gave his life in the great atoning sacrifice whereby he became my Savior, your Savior, and the Savior of all mankind. I also know there is a prophet of God on the earth today who speaks the mind and will of the Lord to his children in the same manner that prophets have spoken to God's children in all ages of the past. May the Lord give us the capacity to understand his teachings and the strength to follow with conviction and steadfastness, I pray 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 as our concluding speaker.

We wish to express our thanks and appreciation to the General Authori-

ties who have spoken to us this morning, and to the Tabernacle Choir for their inspirational music.

This session has been broadcast by many radio and television stations in the western United States, and short-waved in English over Radio New York Worldwide to Europe, South America, Central America, Mexico, Africa, and parts of Asia.

This session has also been carried by direct wire from the Tabernacle over direct oceanic cables to members and friends assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, France, Holland and Austria.

We wish to recognize at this time our Japanese contingent who are here attending this session, as all sessions of this conference, and who have arranged for special temple sessions for them.

We also recognize saints from many other countries all over the world.

Direct circuits will also carry this session to members and friends who are assembled in chapels throughout eastern Canada.

We shall conclude this sixth session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "Hallelujah," after which the benediction will be pronounced by Elder O. Leslie Stone, president of the Salt Lake Temple. This conference will then stand adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "Hallelujah."

The benediction was given by President O. Leslie Stone of the Salt Lake Temple.

The conference was adjourned until 2 o'clock p.m.