

President Joseph Fielding Smith

President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

My dear brothers and sisters:

We welcome you, and all those who hear and see on radio and television. We welcome you to the sessions of the 141st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We are here today to wait upon the Lord, to worship him in spirit and in truth, to be fed the bread of life, and to receive counsel and instruction from those whom he has chosen to administer in the affairs of his church.

I sincerely hope that all who attend and all those whose lives are touched in any way by the proceedings of this conference will put themselves in tune with the Spirit so they will be built up in faith and in testimony and in the desire to keep the commandments and do those things which please the Lord.

Gospel revealed anew

We are engaged in the Lord's work; this is his church; he is the author of the plan of salvation; it is his gospel which we have received by the opening of the heavens in this day; and our desire and whole purpose in life should be to believe the truths he has revealed and to conform our lives to them. No person in or out of the Church should believe any doctrine, advocate any practice, or support any cause that is not in harmony with the divine will. Our sole objective where the truths of salvation are concerned should be to find out what the Lord has revealed and then to believe and act accordingly.

Since the Lord has revealed his everlasting gospel anew to us in this day and has made The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the custodian and dispenser of its saving truths, I desire now to restate for the Church and for the world a few of those eternal principles which must

be accepted by mankind if they will save themselves. Our knowledge of these simple and yet profound doctrines has come to us by revelation in this dispensation.

Knowledge of God

We know that our Heavenly Father is a glorified, exalted personage who has all power, all might, and all dominion, and that he knows all things. We testify that he, through his Only Begotten Son, is the Creator of this earth and of worlds without number, all of which are peopled by his spirit children.

We testify that he is infinite and eternal and that he ordained the laws whereby his spirit children might have power to advance and progress and become like him.

Salvation in Christ

We know that salvation is in Christ; that he was the Firstborn Son of the Eternal Father; that he was chosen and foreordained in the councils of heaven to work out the infinite and eternal atonement; that he was born into the world as the Son of God; and that he has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

We believe with perfect surety that Christ came to ransom men from the temporal and spiritual death brought into the world by the fall of Adam and that he took upon himself the sins of all men on condition of repentance.

We testify that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the plan of salvation; and that through our Lord's atoning sacrifice all men shall be raised in immortality, to be judged by him according to the deeds done in the flesh; and that those who believe and obey the fullness of gospel law shall

be raised also unto eternal life in our Father's kingdom.

We believe it is by grace that we are saved after all that we can do, and that building upon the foundation of the atonement of Christ, all men must work out their salvation with fear and trembling before the Lord.

We proclaim that to gain salvation men must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of their sins, be baptized by immersion by one who has authority, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and then press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, keeping the commandments and enduring to the end.

Revealed in successive dispensations

We announce that this plan of salvation, this gospel plan, has been revealed to men in successive dispensations beginning with our father Adam, the first man; that it was known to Enoch and Noah, to Abraham and Moses; that it was proclaimed in plainness to the ancient inhabitants of the American continent; and that it is the same plan which was taught by Jesus and Peter and Paul, and the former-day saints who lived in the meridian of time.

And further—and this is exceedingly important where all men now living are concerned—we believe that following a long night of darkness, unbelief, and departure from the truths of pure and perfect Christianity, the Lord in his infinite wisdom has again restored to earth the fullness of the everlasting gospel.

The final dispensation

We know Joseph Smith is a prophet; that the Father and the Son appeared to him in the spring of 1820 to usher in this final gospel dispensation; that he translated the Book of Mormon by the gift and power of God; that he received keys and authority from angels sent for this very

purpose; and that the Lord revealed to him the doctrines of salvation.

We announce that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on earth, the only place where men may come to learn the true doctrines of salvation and find the authority of the holy priesthood.

Personal witness available

We believe the Holy Ghost is a revelator and that he will bear testimony to honest people everywhere that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that Joseph Smith is a prophet, and that this church is "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth." (D&C 1:30.)

There is no need for anyone to remain in darkness; the light of the everlasting gospel is here; and every sincere investigator on earth can gain a personal witness from the Holy Spirit of the truth and divine nature of the Lord's work.

Peter said: "... God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted" by him (Acts 10:34-35), which means that the Lord will pour out his Spirit upon the faithful so they will know of themselves of the truths of this religion.

Testimony of the truth

Now, as one among you who has come to know, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the Lord has restored his gospel and set up his kingdom again on the earth for the last time, I bear my testimony to the truth of these things.

I know that God lives; I know that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten of the Father; and I know that Joseph Smith and his successors have been the instruments in the Lord's hands of making the blessings of heaven available to men on earth in this present day.

And I pray that the Lord's purposes on earth, both in and out of the

Church, may speedily be brought to pass; that he will bless his faithful Saints; and that the hearts of hosts of men who seek truth and whose hearts are right before the Lord may become inheritors with us of the fullness of the blessings of the restored gospel.

I say this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ■

Immediately following President Smith's address, the Tabernacle Choir sang the following two numbers: "For the Beauty of the Earth," and "Come Unto Jesus."

President N. Eldon Tanner

For the benefit of the television and radio audience who have just joined with us, we are gathered in the historic

Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square in this first session of the 141st 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: "Gloria."

Following the singing, President Spencer W. Kimball, Acting President of the Twelve, will speak to us.

The anthem, "Gloria," was rendered by the Tabernacle Choir.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Spencer W. Kimball, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Acting President of the Council of the Twelve

Beloved brothers and sisters and friends, I fully subscribe to all that President Smith has just said, and I testify that he is God's prophet upon the earth today.

History repeats itself, and we need only return to the past to learn the solutions for the present and the future. The Corinthians seem to have been troubled by the same conflicting messages we hear in our own time. Paul told them:

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

". . . for ye shall speak into the air.

"There are . . . so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." (1 Cor. 14:8-10.)

Paul's impressive voice

Paul's was an impressive voice, powerful and strong, never silenced in all the interim centuries.

There are voices all about us. Some are harsh and raucous, others sweet and penetrating.

Paul's revelations included visions of these latter days. His voice is saying:

". . . in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

"Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats. . . ." (1 Tim. 4:1.)