

PRIMARY ASSOCIATION

LaVern Watts Parmley, President
 Naomi Ward Randall, First Counselor
 Florence Reece Lane, Second Counselor
 with all members of the Board as at present constituted.

TABERNACLE CHOIR

Isaac M. Stewart, President
 Richard P. Condie, Conductor
 Jay E. Welch, Assistant Conductor

TABERNACLE ORGANISTS

Alexander Schreiner, Chief Organist
 Robert N. Cundick
 Roy M. Darley
 Frank W. Asper, Organist Emeritus

President Tanner

President Smith, as nearly as I can see, the voting has been unanimous in the affirmative.

President Harold B. Lee

Thank you, President Tanner, and

thank you brethren and sisters for this sustaining vote.

We shall now hear from Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve, and he will be followed by Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Boyd K. Packer

Of the Council of the Twelve

It was one year ago today, in a solemn assembly, that we had the privilege of raising our hands to sustain the authorities of the Church, much as we have done this morning. It was on that April morning that I heard my name read as one presented for your sustaining vote as a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. It became my obligation to stand with those other living men who have been called as special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth.

You must have wondered, as I did, why this call should come to me. It seemed accidental at times, that I was preserved in worthiness, yet there was always the constant, quiet, lingering feeling about being guided and being prepared.

A prophet of God

It has been our privilege this morning to raise our hands to sustain the President of the Church. I count that a great privilege and special obligation, for I have a witness about him.

Some weeks before the meeting of last April, I left the office one Friday afternoon thinking of the weekend conference assignment. I waited for the elevator to come down from the fifth floor.

As the elevator doors quietly opened, there stood President Joseph Fielding Smith. There was a moment of surprise in seeing him, since his office is on a lower floor.

As I saw him framed in the doorway, there fell upon me a powerful

witness—there stands the prophet of God. That sweet voice of Spirit that is akin to light, that has something to do with pure intelligence, affirmed to me that this was the prophet of God.

I need not try to define that experience to Latter-day Saints. That kind of witness is characteristic of this church. It is not something reserved to those in high office. It is a witness, not only available but vital, to every member.

The First Presidency

As it is with the President, so it is with his counselors.

North of us in the Wasatch Range stand three mountain peaks. The poet would describe them as mighty pyramids of stone. The center one, the highest of the three, the map would tell you is Willard Peak. But the pioneers called them "The Presidency." If you should go to Willard, look to the east, and up, way up, there stands "The Presidency."

Thank God for the presidency. Like those peaks, they stand with nothing above them but the heavens. They need our sustaining vote. It is sometimes lonely in those lofty callings of leadership—for their calling is not to please man, but to please the Lord. God bless these three great and good men.

Too sacred for discussion

Occasionally during the past year I have been asked a question. Usually it comes as a curious, almost an idle, question about the qualifications to stand as a witness for Christ. The question they ask is, "Have you seen Him?"

That is a question that I have never asked of another. I have not asked that question of my brethren in the Quorum, thinking that it would be so sacred and so personal that one would have to have some special inspiration, indeed, some authorization, even to ask it.

There are some things just too sacred to discuss. We know that as it relates to the temples. In our temples, sacred ordinances are performed; sacred experiences are enjoyed. And yet we do not, because of the nature of them, discuss them outside those sacred walls.

It is not that they are secret, but they are sacred; not to be discussed, but to be harbored and to be protected and regarded with the deepest of reverence.

The mysteries of God

I have come to know what the prophet Alma meant:

"... It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

"And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full." (Al. 12:9-10.)

Testimonies in simple words

There are those who hear testimonies borne in the Church, by those in high station and by members in the wards and branches, all using the same words—"I know that God lives; I know that Jesus is the Christ," and come to question, "Why cannot it be said in plainer words? Why aren't they more explicit and more descriptive? Cannot the apostles say more?"

How like the sacred experience in the temple becomes our personal testimony. It is sacred, and when we are wont to put it into words, we say it in the same way—all using the same words. The apostles declare it in the same phrases with the little Primary or

Sunday School youngster. "I know that God lives and I know that Jesus is the Christ."

We would do well not to disregard the testimonies of the prophets or of the children, for "he imparteth his words by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also. Now this is not all; little children do have words given unto them many times which confound the wise and the learned." (Al. 32:23.)

The Spirit beareth record

Some seek for a witness to be given in some new and dramatic and different way.

The bearing of a testimony is akin to a declaration of love. The romantics and poets and couples in love, from the beginning of time, have sought more impressive ways of saying it, or singing it, or writing it. They have used all of the adjectives, all of the superlatives, all manner of poetic expression. And when all is said and done, the declaration which is most powerful is the simple, three-word variety.

To one who is honestly seeking, the testimony borne in these simple phrases is enough, for it is the spirit that beareth record, not the words.

There is a power of communication as real and tangible as electricity. Man has devised the means to send images and sound through the air to be caught on an antenna and reproduced and heard and seen. This other communication may be likened to that, save it be a million times more powerful, and the witness it brings is always the truth.

There is a process by which pure intelligence can flow, by which we can come to know of a surety, nothing doubting.

Testimony that Jesus is the Christ

I said there was a question that could not be taken lightly nor answered at all without the prompting of the Spirit. I have not asked that

question of others, but I have heard them answer it—but not when they were asked. They have answered it under the prompting of the Spirit, on sacred occasions, when "the Spirit beareth record." (D&C 1:39.)

I have heard one of my brethren declare: "I know from experiences, too sacred to relate, that Jesus is the Christ."

I have heard another testify: "I know that God lives; I know that the Lord lives. And more than that, I know the Lord."

It was not their words that held the meaning or the power. It was the Spirit. ". . . for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men." (2 Ne. 33:1.)

I speak upon this subject in humility, with the constant feeling that I am the least in every way of those who are called to this holy office.

Witness through sustaining God's servants

I have come to know that the witness does not come by seeking after signs. It comes through fasting and prayer, through activity and testing and obedience. It comes through sustaining the servants of the Lord and following them.

Karl G. Maeser was taking a group of missionaries across the Alps. As they reached a summit, he stopped. Gesturing back down the trail to some poles set in the snow to mark the way across the glacier, he said, "Brethren, there stands the Priesthood. They are just common sticks like the rest of us . . . but the position they hold makes them what they are to us. If we step aside from the path they mark, we are lost."¹

The witness depends upon sustaining his servants as we have done here in sign and as we should do in action.

¹Alma F. Burton, *Karl G. Maeser, Mormon Educator* (Deseret Book Co., 1953), p. 22.

Personal witness

Now, I wonder with you why one such as I should be called to the holy apostleship. There are so many qualifications that I lack. There is so much in my effort to serve that is wanting. As I have pondered on it, I have come to only one single thing, one qualification in which there may be cause, and that is, I have *that* witness.

I declare to you that I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that he lives. He was born in the meridian of time. He taught his gospel, was tried,

was crucified. He rose on the third day. He was the first fruits of the resurrection. He has a body of flesh and bone. Of this I bear testimony. Of him I am a witness. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ■

President Harold B. Lee

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Alvin R. Dyer

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

On the day of Pentecost in Old Jerusalem, the apostle Peter declared unto the people that Jesus Christ, who had before been preached unto them, would come again, but that that day would be delayed until the restitution or restoration of all things, and that this event had been promised since the world began. The organization of the Church of Christ, known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this day and age, is part of that restoration.

Events at Church organization

On this day we reaffirm our conviction and testimony of that which transpired in the organization of the Church of Christ in this dispensation 141 years ago today. Upon that occasion, unto those who were assembled, the Lord referred to that which had already been accomplished in the restoration of the gospel through his servant Joseph Smith. Here are his words:

"And gave unto him commandments which inspired him;

"And gave him power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;

"Which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the gospel

of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also;

"Which was given by inspiration, and is confirmed to others by the ministering of angels, and is declared unto the world by them—

"Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old;

"Thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. Amen." (D&C 20:7-12.)

The last dispensation

The Church of Christ has been restored in this the last of all dispensations, which is called by the Lord "the dispensation of the fulness of times." (D&C 112.) When completed, it will produce a welding together of all former dispensations, with their keys, principals, and intelligence down from the time of Adam. Being the last, this dispensation presages the doctrines of last things in the preparation for the second coming of Christ the Lord and of the end of the mortal existence of man upon the earth.