

The prophet Nephi's counsel applies today as it did in days of old. He admonished:

"... remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer . . . that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, . . . when all of his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you . . . because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation

whereon if men build they cannot fall." (Hel. 5:12.)

May this be so with your family, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder David B. Haight, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I asked the Lord what he would have me say on this occasion and received the distinct and affirmative impression that I should bear testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.

I have what is known as "the testimony of Jesus," which means that I know by personal revelation from the Holy Spirit to my soul that Jesus is the Lord; that he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; and that he has restored in this day the fullness of his everlasting truth, so that we with the ancients can become inheritors of his presence in eternity.

Source of a testimony

Now a testimony comes from the Spirit of God. There is no other source. And when a testimony is borne, it has to be borne by the power of the Spirit. And so I desire and pray fervently that I may be guided by that power on this occasion, so that what I say will be the mind and will and voice of the Lord.

I desire to bear testimony to myself, to you as members of the Church, and to all the world. As I speak by the power of the Spirit, if my testimony is to sink into your hearts and be in you a well springing up unto eternal life—

if your hearts are to burn within you, so that you will know of the truth and divinity of the words spoken—you must be guided by the power of the same Spirit, and so I pray that your hearts may be opened and that your souls will burn within you and you will know of the verity of what is said.

I shall take the liberty, both by way of testimony and to set the tone for what is involved, to read these words of my own composition:

I Believe in Christ

I believe in Christ, he is my king;
With all my heart to him I'll sing;
I'll raise my voice in praise and joy,
In grand amens my tongue employ.

I believe in Christ, he is God's Son;
On earth to dwell his soul did come;
He healed the sick, the dead he raised,
Good works were his, his name be praised.

I believe in Christ, O blessed name,
As Mary's Son he came to reign
'Mid mortal men, his earthly kin,
To save them from the woes of sin.

I believe in Christ, who marked the path,
Who did gain all his Father hath,
Who said to men: "Come, follow me,
That ye, my friends, with God may be."

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I believe in Christ—my Lord, my God—
My feet he plants on gospel sod;
I'll worship him with all my might;
He is the source of truth and light.

I believe in Christ, he ransoms me;
From Satan's grasp he sets me free,
And I shall live with joy and love
In his eternal courts above.

I believe in Christ, he stands supreme;
From him I'll gain my fondest dream;
And while I strive through grief and
pain,
His voice is heard: "Ye shall obtain."

I believe in Christ; so come what may,
With him I'll stand in that great day
When on this earth he comes again,
To rule among the sons of men.

The plan of salvation

Now, salvation originates with God our Heavenly Father. Indeed, salvation is to be like him, to inherit, possess, and receive what he enjoys. If we are to know God, we must believe as he believes, think as he thinks, and experience what he experiences.

The great plan of salvation was created by our Heavenly Father, to enable us to advance and progress and become like him. But salvation is centered in Christ. The plan called for the creation and peopling of this earth, so that we might come here and gain experiences that were not available in any other way.

We dwell with our Father in the eternities that preceded this life. We were present when the great cry went forth from him through the midst of eternity: "Whom shall I send to be my son, to work out the infinite and eternal atoning sacrifice, to put in full force and operation the terms and conditions of my eternal plan?" We were there, and in the poetic language of Elder Orson F. Whitney, we beheld:

"A stature mingling strength with grace
Of meek though Godlike mien,

The glory of whose countenance
Outshone the noonday sheen.
Whiter his hair than ocean spray,
Or frost of alpine hill.
He spake:—attention grew more grave,
The stillness e'en more still.

"'Father!'—the voice like music fell,
Clear as the murmuring flow
Of mountain streamlet trickling down
From heights of virgin snow.
'Father,' it said, 'since one must die,
Thy children to redeem,
Whilst earth, as yet unformed and
void,
With pulsing life shall teem;

"'And mighty Michael foremost fall,
That mortal man may be,
And chosen Savior Thou must send,
Lo, here am I—send me!
I ask, I seek no recompense,
Save that which then were mine;
Mine be the willing sacrifice,
The endless glory Thine.'"

—Joseph Fielding Smith,
Way to Perfection, p. 52.

Centered in Christ

Now salvation is centered in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the language of the angel who came to King Benjamin: ". . . salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent." (Mosiah 3:18.)

Joseph Smith was asked, "What are the fundamental principles of your religion?" He answered: "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it." (*Documentary History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 30.)

That is to say, the atoning sacrifice of the Lord is the center of all things, as far as we are concerned. God our Heavenly Father created us, without

which we would have no existence. And Christ the Son has redeemed us, without which there would be neither immortality nor eternal life.

Now the glorious thing that has happened in this day is that the heavens have been opened; that God has spoken again; that he has called living oracles, men who are apostles and prophets, to be his mouthpiece, to declare his mind and his purpose and his will to the world; and his message is the restored gospel of Jesus Christ; and it is administered in the Church which bears his name.

Testimonies of many

Now, my voice is the voice of testimony. I bear record of the truth and divinity of this work. But my voice is not alone. It is not one voice crying in a wilderness.

The testimony that I bear is just an echo of the testimonies that have been borne by faithful people from the spring of 1820, when the Father and the Son appeared to usher in this last great dispensation of eternal truth. And the testimony that I bear is but a harbinger of that testimony which yet will be borne by ten thousand times ten thousand people, redeemed out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people, redeemed by obedience to the message that God restored through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith in this day.

Saving power

And if there is one wondrous thing about this work, it is that it is true; that there is saving efficacy and virtue and force in the gospel of Jesus Christ; and that the power of God unto salvation is found here in the tops of these

everlasting hills; and this glorious truth is spreading out to all the nations of the earth as rapidly as people in them accept the testimony and witness that is borne and believe the truths that our fellow representatives proclaim. This is a day of which God has said that all of gathered Israel shall be witnesses of his name. "... ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." (Isa. 43:12.)

This is a day when he has said that every elder in his kingdom, everyone who holds the holy priesthood, has power to speak in his name, to have the Holy Ghost bear record and enlighten his mind, and to proclaim the truths of salvation.

I proclaim these truths and desire in my heart to have men believe and obey. I think I can say with Nephi that the fullness of mine intent is to persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob and be saved—because the work is true, because salvation is in Christ. And God being our witness, it is true. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

Following Elder McConkie's address, the Choir sang "We Are Watchmen" without previous announcement.

President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy bear that powerful testimony. He was followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "We Are Watchmen." The words of this song were written by President Joseph Fielding Smith.

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.