

## President Spencer W. Kimball

My brothers and sisters and friends,  
another April has come, and with it  
the birthdate of the Church, organized  
on the birthday of our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ, which we have celebrated  
on the sixth of April. This weekend, we  
conduct the 144th Annual Conference  
of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day  
Saints.

### President Harold B. Lee

The last three conferences we had  
as our leader President Harold B. Lee,  
whom we miss greatly today. He was a  
man of many talents, of great strength  
and courage, and with an obsession to  
follow the instructions of the Lord.

Since December 26, we have been  
lonely without him. He was as a high  
peak in a mighty range of impregnable  
mountains. He has become an important  
part of eternity.

Sister Jo M. Shaw has written  
lines in memory of him, and may I quote  
those words as I express humbly, but  
sincerely, our love and affection for  
President Harold B. Lee. We are grateful  
to have Sister Lee with us today.

In Memory of a Prophet of God  
President Harold B. Lee

A prophet died, and at his grave  
Stood mourning Saints of God.  
We wept, and heaven wept; her tears  
Splashed on the winter sod.

Some lived and died and never knew  
The value of his word  
Because they never knew he was  
A prophet of the Lord.

Some found his comfort, far away  
And never saw his face,  
Nor touched his hand, nor heard his  
voice;  
Still, knew his gentle grace.

Some lived near the prophet's heart  
And knelt with him in prayer;

Acquainted with a noble man,  
They knew his kind watch-care.

I bless his name because I knew!  
And know! And shall remember  
The day I wept, and heaven wept,  
One sad day in December.

We would not have had it thus,  
but now the only thing for us to do is  
press forward firmly.

### Consolidation of efforts

In the press conferences an ever-  
recurring question has been asked us:  
"Mr. President, what are you going to  
do now that you have the leadership  
of the Church in your hands?"

My answer has been that for the  
past 30 years, as a member of the Council  
of the Twelve Apostles, I have had a  
little to do with the making of policies  
and the formation of the present exten-  
sive, full, and comprehensive pro-  
gram. I anticipate no major changes  
in the immediate future, but do hope to  
give increased emphasis to some of the  
programs already established. This is a  
day of consolidating our efforts, and  
firming up our programs, and reaffirming  
our policies.

We recognize our greatest problem  
is our rapid growth. Our increase in  
numbers is phenomenal, for the popu-  
lation has doubled in these past few  
years. Thirty years ago we counted our  
members in hundreds of thousands, and  
today over three million. There were  
146 stakes in 1943 when I first visited  
stakes, and today there are some 635  
stakes. There were 38 missions in 1943;  
today there are 107. In 1943 there were  
no stakes overseas, and now 70. This  
unprecedented growth pleases us, but  
challenges us tremendously. We are  
interested in numbers only incidentally.  
We are obsessed first to see that all men  
obtain eternal life.

The monumental challenge in 1974, then, is to provide trained leadership for the fast-multiplying units of members and to help that membership to keep clean from that world in which they must live. May we then reaffirm some vital matters which concern us.

### Civil obligations

One is our civil obligations. We are approaching election time, when we must choose again those persons who will represent us in positions of responsibility in our civil government—federal, state, and local.

Early in this dispensation the Lord made clear the position his restored church should take with respect to civil government. In the revelation he gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he said: "And now, verily I say unto you concerning the . . . law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, [that it] belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.

"Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you . . . in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land." (D&C 98:4-6.)

In harmony with this statement, the Church later adopted as one of its Articles of Faith: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law." (12th Article of Faith.)

### Governments and laws

In 1835 at a general assembly the Church adopted by unanimous vote a "Declaration of Belief regarding Governments and Laws in general," in which it said:

"We believe that all governments necessarily require civil officers and magistrates to enforce the laws of the same; and that such as will administer the law in equity and justice should be sought for and upheld by the voice

of the people if a republic, or the will of the sovereign." (D&C 134:3.)

In 1903 President Joseph F. Smith said, "The Church [as such] does not engage in politics; its members belong to the political parties at their own pleasure. . . ." ("The Probable Cause," *Improvement Era*, June 1903, p. 626.)

And in the October conference in 1951, the First Presidency said:

"A threat to our unity derives from unseemly personal antagonisms developed in partisan political controversy. The Church, while reserving the right to advocate principles of good government underlying equity, justice, and liberty, the political integrity of officials, and the active participation of its members, and the fulfillment of their obligations in civic affairs, exercises no constraint on the freedom of individuals to make their own choices and affiliations . . . any man who makes representation to the contrary does so without authority and justification in fact." (President Stephen L. Richards, *Conference Report*, October 1951, pp. 114-15.)

Now these statements we reaffirm as setting forth the position of the Church today concerning civil government and politics.

Furthermore, in order to implement our divine charge to seek for such "civil officers . . . as will administer the law in equity and justice," we urge Church members to attend the mass meetings of their respective political parties and there exercise their influence.

Every Latter-day Saint should sustain, honor, and obey the constitutional law of the land in which he lives.

### Pattern of life

Along with our unprecedented growth, our next problem is definitely the world—not the high ranges and the wide valleys and the hot deserts and the deep oceans, but the pattern of life to which too many of our people gear their lives.

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"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," said John. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15-16.)

The encroachment of the world into our lives is threatening! How hard it seems for many of us to live *in* the world and yet not *of* the world.

Through Isaiah the word of the Lord comes:

"And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." (Isa. 13:11.)

When Satan took the Lord into an exceeding high mountain, he promised, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:9.)

"These things" were the dens of vice and areas of sin and physical gratification and lustful temptations.

Long ago the Lord made his plans with great precision and announced them, saying, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

His further words: ". . . that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory." (Moses 6:59.)

### Works of the flesh

Now the works of the flesh are many, as given by Paul: ". . . Perilous times shall come [They are upon us!] For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . Without natural affection . . . incontinent . . ." (2 Tim. 3:1-3), ". . . [with] vile affections: for even their women did change the natural

use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another . . . inventors of evil things. . ." (Rom. 1:26, 27, 30), thieves, drunkards, extortioners.

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.)

These are some of the ugly acts and activities that we call the world.

Just before the crucifixion, the Lord pleaded, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John 17:15.)

This is the prayer we continually utter, and our major effort is to see that the members of the Church are sanctified through their righteousness.

These ugly transgressions Paul called "doctrines of devils," and their authors "seducing spirits." (See 1 Tim. 4:1.) These distortions of the normal life have not changed in this century, except possibly to grow more vile and permissive and vulgar and degenerate.

### "Submit yourselves . . . to God"

And we plead with our people everywhere, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7.)

Our sermon is one of reaffirmation and reassurance. We urge our people to "stand in holy places." (D&C 45:32.)

What we are saying today is not new doctrine, but as old as the day of creation.

There may be some who have a general feeling of uneasiness because of world conditions and lengthening shadows of evil, but the Lord said, ". . . if ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30), and again, "Peace I leave with you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.)

You have come here seeking guid-

ance. It is the purpose of your leaders to give that direction. As the brethren speak, you will feel the inspiration of our Lord. The gospel gives purpose in our lives. It is the way to happiness.

Sister Eliza R. Snow wrote of our Lord:

“He marked the path and led the way,  
And every point defines  
To light and life and endless day  
Where God’s full presence shines.”  
*LDS Hymns*, no. 68.

### The lighted way

Now the family is basic. We are children of our Heavenly Father, and as he loves us, so our souls are bound up in our posterity. All the morals are woven into the warp and woof of the gospel of Christ.

The lighted way, then, brings us to normal, clean courting of young men and women, coming eventually to a virtuous union at an altar where a fully authorized servant of God seals the union for eternity. The Hebrew saints were properly taught, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” (Heb. 13:4.)

And to those who might decry marriage or postpone it or forbid it Paul spoke, condemning them. It is generally selfishness, cold and self-centered, which leads people to shun marriage responsibility. There are many who talk and write against marriage. Even some of our own delay marriage and argue against it. To all who are deceived by these “doctrines of devils,” we urge the return to normalcy. We call upon all people to accept normal marriage as a basis for true happiness. The Lord did not give sex to man for a plaything. Basically marriage presupposes a family. The psalmist said:

### Children an heritage

“Lo, children are an heritage of

the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

“Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. . . .” (Ps. 127:3, 5.)

Certainly anyone who purposely denies himself or herself honorable parenthood is to be pitied, for the great joy of parenthood is fundamental in the normal, full life, and we remember the command of God in the beginning, “. . . Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. . . .” (Gen. 1:28.)

Then the recorder writes: “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. . . .” (Gen. 1:31.)

In our dispensation comes the doctrine: “. . . for [virgins] are given unto [man] to multiply and replenish the earth, according to [God’s] commandment, . . . and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified.” (D&C 132:63.)

### Leadership in the home

We decry the prevalence of broken homes. Every man should love his wife and cherish and protect her all the days of their lives and she should love, honor, and appreciate her husband; and we hear the historian Moses quoting his Lord: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” (Gen. 2:24.)

Paul says: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. . . .

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . .

“So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

“For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cher-

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isheth it, even as the Lord the church." (Eph. 5:22, 23, 25, 28-29.)

This is often misunderstood, both by husbands and by wives. Consider it well, and do not contend nor argue with your Heavenly Father. When a man gives leadership in his home as Christ gives leadership in his church, little else can be desired.

### Most divorces unwarranted

Analyze the divorces of which you know, and you will find so often selfishness is in them.

Most divorces are unwarranted and come of weakness and selfishness and often result in great unhappiness for the divorced persons and also almost irreparable damage and frustration to the unfavored children, who are torn and disturbed.

Certainly, selfishness is near its greatest peak when innocent children must suffer for the sins of their parents. Almost like a broken record come from divorcees that it is better to have them grow up in a single-parent home than a fighting home. The answer to that specious argument is: there need be no battling parents in fighting homes.

Someone checked a long list of divorces and found that almost all of them came about through selfishness, where people were determined to *get* as much as they could and *give* as little as possible. It was found in this survey that about 90 percent gave as the reason for the breakup immorality on the part of one or both of the participants.

Immorality is totally selfish. Can you think of a single unselfish element in that sin? Accordingly, if two good people will discard selfishness, generally they can be compatible.

### Growing evil of abortion

Again, abortion is a growing evil that we speak against. Certainly the terrible sin of premeditated abortion would be hard to justify. It is almost

inconceivable that an abortion would ever be committed to save face or embarrassment, to save trouble or inconvenience, or to escape responsibility. How could one submit to such an operation or be party in any way by financing or encouraging? If special rare cases could be justified, certainly they would be rare indeed. We place it high on the list of sins against which we strongly warn the people.

"Abortion must be considered one of the most revolting and sinful practices in this day, when we are witnessing the frightful evidence of permissiveness leading to sexual immorality." (*Priesthood Bulletin*, February 1973, p. 1.)

### Drug addiction

As to drugs ". . . the Church has consistently opposed the improper and harmful use of drugs or similar substances under circumstances which would result in addiction, physical or mental impairment or in lowering moral standards." We reaffirm this positive statement.

### Improper use of body

Then in the area of one of Satan's most destructive evils, we strongly warn all our people from childhood to old age to beware of the chains of bondage, suffering, and remorse which come from improper use of the body.

The human body is the sacred home of the spirit child of God, and unwarranted tampering with or defilement of this sacred tabernacle can bring only remorse and regret. We urge: stay clean, uncontaminated, undefiled.

Jude says: ". . . There should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." (Jude 18.)

We urge, with Peter, ". . . Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1 Pet. 2:11.) No indecent exposure or pornography or other aberrations to defile the mind and spirit. No

fondling of bodies, one's own or that of others, and no sex between persons except in proper marriage relationships. This is positively prohibited by our Creator in all places, at all times, and we reaffirm it. Even in marriage there can be some excesses and distortions. No amount of rationalization to the contrary can satisfy a disappointed Father in heaven. In this connection, we quote a paragraph from a popular evangelist, Billy Graham:

"... The Bible celebrates sex and its proper use, presenting it as God-created, God-ordained, God-blessed. It makes plain that God himself implanted the physical magnetism between the sexes for two reasons: for the propagation of the human race, and for the expression of that kind of love between man and wife that makes for true oneness. His command to the first man and woman to be 'one flesh' was as important as his command to 'be fruitful and multiply.'

"The Bible makes plain that evil, when related to sex means not the use of something inherently corrupt but the *misuse* of something pure and good. It teaches clearly that sex can be a wonderful servant but a terrible master: that it can be a creative force more powerful than any other in the fostering of a love, companionship, happiness or can be the most destructive of all of life's forces." (Billy Graham, "What the Bible Says About Sex," *Reader's Digest* May 1970, p. 118.)

We reaffirm again our strong, unalterable stand against unchastity in all of its many manifestations.

### Sacred role of mothers

Now our mothers have a sacred role. The following is a partial quote from the First Presidency of the Church. We reaffirm it strongly:

"Motherhood thus becomes a holy calling, a sacred dedication for carrying out the Lord's plans, a consecration of devotion to the uprearing and fostering,

the nurturing in body, mind, and spirit, of those who kept their first estate and who come to this earth for their second estate 'to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.' (Abr. 3:25.) To lead them to keep their second estate is the work of motherhood, and 'they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.'

"This divine service of motherhood can be rendered only by mothers. It may not be passed to others. Nurses cannot do it; public nurseries cannot do it; hired help cannot do it—only mother, aided as much as may be by the loving hands of father, brothers, and sisters, can give the full needed measure of watchful care.

"The mother who entrusts her child to the care of others, that she may do non-motherly work, whether for gold, for fame, or for civic service should remember that 'a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.' (Prov. 29:15.) In our day the Lord has said that unless parents teach their children the doctrines of the Church 'the sin be upon the heads of the parents.' (D&C 68:25.)

"Motherhood is near to Divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels. To you mothers in Israel we say, God bless and protect you, and give you the strength and courage, the faith and knowledge, the holy love and consecration to duty, that shall enable you to fill to the fullest measure the sacred calling which is yours. To you mothers and mothers-to-be we say: Be chaste, keep pure, live righteously, that your posterity to the last generation may call you blessed." ("Message of the First Presidency," *Deseret News Weekly Church Edition*, October 1942, p. 5.)

### Our program

This, then, is our program: to re-

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affirm and boldly carry forward the work of God in cleanliness, uprightness, and to take that gospel of truth to that world that needs so much that godly life.

Eternal life is our goal. It can be reached only by following the path our Lord has marked out for us.

I know this is true and right. I love our Heavenly Father and I love his Son, and I am proud to be even a weak vessel to push forward their great eternal work. I testify to all this humbly, sincerely, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Following President Kimball's address, the Tabernacle Choir without announcement sang the following two

numbers: "Father in Heaven," and "I Need Thee Every Hour."

### President Spencer W. Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has just sung "Father in Heaven" by Friedrich Fleming, followed by Robert Lowry's worshipful, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

For the benefit of the television and radio audience who have just joined with us, we are gathered in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City in this, the first session of the 144th Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We shall now hear from Elder Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder Joseph Anderson

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

As we listened to the remarks of President Kimball, there came into my mind the words of the hymn Latter-day Saints love to sing:

"We thank thee, O God, for a prophet  
To guide us in these latter days.  
We thank thee for sending the gospel  
To lighten our minds with its rays."

*LDS Hymns*, no. 196.

### Spiritual assets

It would seem of the utmost importance that thinking people everywhere should conscientiously reflect upon their spiritual assets. Man is a dual being, spiritual and physical. Whether it be an individual or a nation, he or it cannot achieve permanent success or happiness without spirituality. Paul said: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Rom. 8:6.)

There is a constant battle between

the things of the flesh and the things of God—the desire for peace and the attractions of the flesh. It is also a well-known fact that in times of prosperity man is often tempted to forget God, but in days of trial and sorrow he prays unto the Lord that his countenance may smile upon him and that the Lord will remember him in the days of his affliction. This pertains to peoples as well as individuals.

### A return to faith in God

The world needs today a return to the outmoded standards of character. We need to return to a faith in God and a determination to serve him.

The following excerpt from a statement in the *Evening and Morning Star* of July 1832 is as pertinent today as it was at the time it was first published:

"The old world was destroyed for rejecting the revelations of God given