

ing, "The Voice of God Again Is Heard."

We shall now be pleased to hear

from Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of Twelve Apostles, who will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

Of the Council of the Twelve

This is the season of the year when we come together for the general conference of the Church in this great historic Tabernacle, built by the early pioneers and settlers in what was then a wilderness valley of the unexplored mountains of the West. To this conference have come people from around the world—from many, many countries. It is glorious to look out over this large assembly. Some are wearing headsets, listening to the proceedings in their own language. Although we are speaking in English, what is said is being translated simultaneously for those who speak other languages, giving us a community of understanding.

The advance of science

A few years ago it would not have been possible for simultaneous communication for such a multi-language assembly, nor would it have been possible to travel from the distant places of the world in the few hours it has taken us to come here. We marvel at such modern conveniences and at the advance of science in our day. Man, in his quest to achieve, is reaching out into what was unknown in former years and is becoming the master of the elements of the earth and the forces of nature.

The accelerating advance of science, bringing into common use the achievements of our modern world, is staggering to the human mind, yet we know it is the result of the application of natural law—God's law. Many modern scientific developments appear miraculous and amazing to us, even surpassing many of the miracles recalled in the pages of the Old and New Testaments. As marvelous as some of these

modern discoveries may appear, they quickly fall into daily use and become accepted as commonplace.

Man's knowledge has rapidly increased and scientific research accelerated at proportions never known before in the history of the world. This has come about through concentrated effort on the part of business, industry, government, and educational institutions. A large portion of the world's wealth and income is devoted to this pursuit, and hundreds of thousands of men and women around the world are devoting time and effort to the extension of man's knowledge and understanding of science through research. The pursuit of knowledge of the laws of the universe, which we know have always been in existence, has reached new heights, and investigation continues to increase in this search for truth.

Science: Search for truth

Science is providing marvelous things to give ease and comfort to man in this modern world and is creating the highest standard of living ever known. Because we are provided with all our needs and the luxuries of life, can we turn from God, the teachings of religion, or the gospel of Jesus Christ? With the advance of knowledge has come a reliance upon scientific principles of proof, and as a consequence, there are some who do not believe in God because his existence cannot be substantiated by such proof. In reality, scientific research is an endeavor to ascertain truth, and the same principles which are applied to that pursuit are used in the quest to establish the truth of religion as well.

When Jesus spoke to the multitude gathered on the Mount, he said to them:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Matt. 7:7-8.)

This seems to be an admonition to search with determination and make earnest inquiry for truth. It is as applicable to religion as it is to science—the process is the same in either case. The search may require a lifetime to examine the necessary materials, discard that which proves to be false, and isolate the truth when it is found.

The greatest quest

As important as scientific research may be, the greatest quest is a search for God—to determine his reality, his personal attributes, and to secure a knowledge of the gospel of his Son Jesus Christ. It is not easy to find a perfect understanding of God. The search requires persistent effort, and there are some who never move themselves to pursue this knowledge. In place of making the struggle and effort to understand, they follow the opposite course, which requires no effort, and deny his existence. One writer has stated it this way:

"There are musicians but most of us are not musicians, some lacking musical talent, but the majority probably lacking inclination. But of those who are musically talented none ever becomes a great musician without years of persistent, continuous work. Great performers continue long hours of practice even though their reputations may be international. . . . No athlete becomes outstanding, no mechanic becomes skilled, no physician becomes an expert, no orator becomes great, no lawyer becomes renowned, except by persistent practice and many,

many hours of hard work. . . . How foolish it would be for me to close my eyes and ears and say there are no musicians because I am not talented to become a musician; that there are no Edisons because I cannot become an inventor; that there are no artists because I do not have the talents and inclinations to become an artist. Does not reason tell us it is equally foolish for a man to declare there is no God simply because he has not discovered him? . . .

"He who makes no effort to learn of the existence of Deity will, in this life, likely not learn there is a Deity. But his ignorance does not warrant him in declaring there is no God." (Joseph F. Merrill, *The Truth-Seeker and Mormonism*, Deseret Book Co., pp. 76-77.)

Faith necessary

Whether seeking for knowledge of scientific truths or to discover God, one must have faith. This becomes the starting point. Faith has been defined in many ways, but the most classic definition was given by the author of the letter to the Hebrews in these meaningful words: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.) In other words, faith makes us confident of what we hope for and convinced of what we do not see. The scientist does not see molecules, atoms, or electrons, yet he knows they exist. He does not see electricity, radiation, or magnetism, but he knows these are unseen realities. In like manner, those who earnestly seek for God do not see him, but they know of his reality by faith. It is more than hope. Faith makes it a conviction—an evidence of things not seen.

The author of the letter to the Hebrews continues: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Heb. 11:3.) Faith is here described as believing or having the conviction that the world was created by the word of God. Witnesses

cannot be produced to prove this fact, but faith gives the knowledge that what we see in the wonders of the earth and in all nature was created by God. It is just as reasonable to believe in an unseen God, in a literal resurrection, or in the miracles of the things pertaining to the spiritual as it is to believe in some of the discoveries in the field of the physical sciences. Faith is the primary tool in the realm of religion, and it is also the tool of the scientist.

"Do his will"

Christ, during his ministry, explained the manner in which one could know the truth about God. He said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:17.) The Master also explained the will of the Father and the great commandment in this manner: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matt. 22:37.) Those who will strive to do God's will and keep his commandments will receive personal revelation as to the divinity of the Lord's work in bearing testimony of the Father.

To those who desire understanding, the words of James explain how it may be obtained: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) It doesn't appear that James was referring to factual knowledge in the sense of science, but rather to the revelation that comes from on high which answers men's questions as the result of following this admonition to pray.

Promise to those who serve

Listen carefully to these words of the Lord: "I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end." Then follows the promise he

makes to those who serve him in righteousness and in truth to the end:

"Great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory.

"And to them will I reveal all mysteries, yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old, and for ages to come, will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things pertaining to my kingdom.

"Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations.

"And their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to heaven; and before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught.

"For by my Spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will—yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man." (D&C 76:5-10.)

Faith, love, prayer

Thus we have the formula for the search for God and the tools to accomplish the quest—faith, love, and prayer. Science has done marvelous things for man, but it cannot accomplish the things he must do for himself, the greatest of which is to find the reality of God. The task is not easy; the labor is not light; but as stated by the Master, "Great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory." (D&C 76:6.)

I have a positive conviction that God is a reality—that he lives. He is our Heavenly Father, and we are his spiritual children. He created the heaven and the earth and all things upon the earth and is the author of the eternal laws by which the universe is governed. These laws are discovered bit by bit as man continues his search, but they have existed always and will remain unchanged forever. I bear this

witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, our Savior and Redeemer by reason of his atoning sacrifice to give life everlasting to all men. May the Lord bless us with the desire for an upward reach to the spiritual—to know God, to find him, and to have the determination to serve him and keep his commandments. This is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "Father in Heaven."

President Kimball

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Father in Heaven."

We are grateful for the cordial response from the owners and operators of numerous radio and television stations for the extensive coverage given to make proceedings of this conference available to a large audience throughout North America, South America, and many other areas of the world.

By means of satellite transmission these services are being carried over radio stations in Australia and countries of Latin America.

Also, these services have been carried over direct oceanic cables to a large number of members and friends assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, and Austria.

We shall conclude this sixth session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell," after which the benediction will be pronounced by Elder Masaru T. Shimizu, former president of the Japan Kobe Mission.

This conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell."

The benediction was pronounced by Elder Masaru T. Shimizu, former president of the Japan Kobe Mission.

The Conference was then adjourned until two o'clock p.m.

THIRD DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

SEVENTH SESSION

The seventh and concluding session of the General Conference began at 2 o'clock p.m. on Sunday, October 6, 1974.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided and President N. Eldon Tanner conducted this session.

The choral numbers were provided by the Tabernacle Choir, with Jerold D. Ottley conducting. Robert Cundick was at the organ.

President Tanner made the following remarks at the beginning of the meeting:

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Spencer W. Kimball, who is presiding at all sessions of the conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We extend a most cordial welcome to all assembled this afternoon in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt