

and they will improve their own lives. Where the gospel is lived, error gives way to truth; idleness becomes productive service; hate and envy become love. Children become blessings; virtue becomes its own reward; and life becomes sacred, a probation to see if we will do "all things whatsoever the Lord God commands us." (See Abr. 3:25.)

All that is needed is to hearken unto the voice of him whom the Lord has chosen to give a clear sound of the trumpet so that all might prepare for the battle. May the world have eyes that see, and ears that hear, and hearts that

understand that they may be converted (see Matt. 13:15), for which I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us. Elder Robert L. Simpson, Assistant to the Twelve and Supervisor of the South Pacific Area, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve.

## Elder Robert L. Simpson

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My beloved brothers and sisters, it's been some time since I've attended a general conference of the Church, and this morning I bring you reconfirmation that the gospel is true in London, England; the gospel is true in Auckland, New Zealand; it's true in Nukua'lofa, Tonga; and it's true in Salt Lake City, Utah. And I'm grateful to be here.

### Members in Pacific

President Kimball, for the past several months, I have been carrying your message of love and greeting to Church members across the sea; and now here this morning I bring to you the sincere affection and continuing loyalty of more than 100,000 members of the Church in the South Pacific area. They are anxiously counting the days until your arrival next February to conduct the most ambitious and widespread series of Church conferences ever undertaken.

The mere contemplation of forty-four conference sessions in seventeen days at nine different locations staggers the imagination; and if that doesn't do it, just add the thought of approximately 28,000 miles of air travel while

changing your clock eighteen times to accommodate the different time zones.

Such is the schedule of a man who has challenged a people to "lengthen their stride." Such is the schedule of a man who declares not only, "Do as I say," but more importantly, "Do as I do." It is so much easier to respond when the trump gives us that certain sound of example.

### "Do It"

Prominently displayed on President Kimball's desk is a slogan which reads simply, "DO IT." With this inspired leader, personal convenience comes second. Everything is done to meet the Lord's convenience. His example for work has become legend and establishes an example for us all to follow.

While I was stationed at an air base in Wyoming during World War II, it was announced in our branch sacrament meeting that the following week a branch conference would be held and that there was a good possibility that the mission president would bring a visiting authority from Salt Lake City with him. As we came to branch conference the

following Sunday morning, we were introduced to that visiting authority, a man that none of us had ever seen before. It was Elder Spencer W. Kimball, the newest member of the Twelve out on one of his very first assignments. His manner was kindly, his testimony so sure, but he expressed concern that such a high calling should come to one such as he. Then with renewed confidence, he said in effect: "Brothers and Sisters: I don't know exactly why the Lord has called me, but I do have one talent to offer. My father taught me how to work; and if the Lord can use a worker, I'm available." Yes, the Lord could use a worker! In fact, he needed a hard worker that might possibly be ready to assume prime responsibility at a most significant time.

### Work hard

Now is that time, and a prophet who knows how to work is leading the way. But one fact is certain—this latter-day work requires thousands of us who are willing to match stride with the prophet.

A prophet who walks alone can do little more than mark time. Every dispensation has had the crying need for hard-working, qualified disciples. President Kimball is calling for the greatest army of hard workers in the history of the Church on earth.

May we consider together these three objectives as a starting point in our preparation to match stride with the prophet:

### Better informed

First, we must be better informed about the doctrine; second, we must be more willing to just DO IT; and third, we must be more readily available to the gifts of the Spirit.

A great teacher once said, "He who does not read has no advantage over him who cannot read." Illiteracy in the

gospel seems almost inexcusable in this day of enlightenment and modern teaching techniques, especially among those of us who are committed in the waters of baptism and who reconfirm that commitment each week as we partake of the sacrament.

### Be willing

On point number two—being willing—it always thrills me to meet with the missionaries all over the world. Is it ever convenient to pick up in the prime of life, to set schooling or an apprenticeship aside for two years, to leave family, friends, and personal interests to respond to a call from the prophet? Convenient, no. Soul satisfying, yes. And when you believe in something, you just DO IT!

I would like to pause for a moment and just share some notes that I made while I was attending a function in the South Pacific just a couple of weeks ago. The counsel received from the prophet should never be taken lightly. The Nukua'lofa Tonga Stake followed President Kimball's counsel to organize choirs in every ward and branch and then to invite their neighbors to join with them in these choirs. Just last month Sister Simpson and I thrilled at this stake's choir festival. Every unit participated. One small branch came with a choir almost as large as the total branch membership. Each choir had a significant number of nonmembers. At least one choir consisted of one-third investigators. All choirs had recently baptized members singing with them. Almost all of them had been baptized as a direct result of choir participation. They were all dressed in white; they were well trained. It was an outstanding evening of spiritual uplift; it was an outstanding example of the blessings that can come by following the direction of a prophet. Does your ward or branch have a choir? Do you invite nonmembers to participate with you? Let's DO IT!

### Missionary effort

And then this little thought—you know, we have more than 7,000 wards and branches in this church. What if every one of those wards and branches set out to bring in just one family in the next year—twelve months to do it. We could invite a man and his wife and maybe they will have two or three children. If this family of five could be invited to sing with us, and if they could be converted, we could take five times 7,000, and you know we would have 35,000 new converts in addition to all else we are doing. This is significant! And these are the rewards that come from doing what a prophet has asked us to do.

Those who become candidates to inherit all that the Father has must learn early that a home teaching assignment is more important than any TV program or any other worldly interest. When the still small voice prompts us, let's DO IT and DO IT NOW!

Spiritual sensitivity is a gift, freely given, to all who are willing to do their best. It is for those who have a desire to serve and the fortitude to take the first step, even when it doesn't seem personally convenient to do so. As we complicate our lives, we discourage the gifts of the Spirit.

### What is civilization?

The Savior taught so simply, so beautifully, but so-called modern civilization has brought so many frustrations into our lives. Today's social environment seems to demand a sophistication in our living patterns that is too often incompatible with more important eternal objectives.

As Sister Simpson and I walked along lower Queen Street in Auckland, New Zealand, the other day, we came to a particular place not far from the wharf. There we paused for a few moments as I related to her the incident that took place at that very spot during my first mission.

I could still see in my mind's eye a very old Maori couple who stood at the curb with thousands of others waving farewell to the Maori Battalion as they marched down to their troop transport and off to war.

The old couple became very excited as one young soldier glanced their way with a big smile. From their Maori conversation, it became apparent that this was their great-grandson going off to war.

His would be an atomic war with sophisticated equipment capable of killing by the thousands—so unlike the Maori wars of the late 1800s that the old Maori had participated in as a young tribal warrior.

Soon the boy was gone from view, and it was then that the old man turned to his wife and said (perhaps a little cynically), "Ka tahi kua pakeha tatou," which in effect means, "So now we are civilized."

What is civilization? What is progress? Just exactly what is important and what isn't? Scriptures teach that God's ways are not man's ways. Nothing has ever been truer than this.

### God's objective

According to the revealed word of God, there is really and truly only one simple overall objective for this world of ours, and that is the accomplishment of immortality and eternal life for all of those who come here to live for a few years.

As we know, the first part of immortality has been accomplished through the atoning sacrifice of the Savior. Everyone, regardless of race, color, creed, or performance, will live beyond the grave and benefit by this unconditional and divine gift.

The further possibility of eternal life or exaltation simply calls for an individual and personal conformity to Christ's teachings and priesthood principles. But unlike immortality, each person needs to be convinced or converted to the disciplines and life-style

that need to be learned and lived in order to achieve this ultimate goal of all eternity.

### Universal acceptance

Most impressive is the universal acceptance of gospel truths in the hearts of honest people. The Savior excluded no one from his circle of influence. So it is in his church today. I know a banker in Boston who will hurry home next Monday for family home evening (he does this every Monday); just exactly like another good brother I know of who owns a small farm in the mountains of Peru. I know a young father who lives on the island of Vava'u in Tonga who goes out faithfully making his home teaching calls in his outrigger canoe; but his faith is no different from that of the young business executive I know in London who loves the work and does his home teaching faithfully—both willing to DO IT.

### Follow the Master

That old Maori great-grandfather had every right to question the true values of so-called civilization that had been thrust upon him. Our jet age of atomic power and automatic everything can be helpful if used properly.

If sophisticated methods and automatic equipment can provide us with

more time to teach mankind eternal principles of God, then we are blessed most abundantly. If it only enables us to "lengthen our stride" in some devious direction, the adversary has won another round.

May we be blessed with the ability to touch hearts and lift up as we follow the life of the Master and the example of his living prophet on earth today as we just simply DO IT is my prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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The Tabernacle Choir sang, "Fight the Good Fight" unannounced following Elder Robert L. Simpson.

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### President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Robert L. Simpson, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve. He was followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "Fight the Good Fight."

We welcome those who have just joined us on television and radio. We are convened in this, the first session of the 145th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church will be our concluding speaker.

## Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the Council of the Twelve

Once or twice in a thousand years—perhaps a dozen times since mortal man became of dust a living soul—an event of such transcendent import occurs that neither heaven nor earth are ever thereafter the same.

### Great events

Once or twice in a score of genera-

tions the hand from heaven clasps the hand on earth in perfect fellowship, the divine drama unfolds, and the whole course of mortal events changes.

Now and then in a quiet garden, or amid the fires and thunders of Sinai, or inside a sepulchre that cannot be sealed, or in an upper room—almost always apart from the gaze of men and seldom known by more than a handful of