

kingdom of God on earth was reestablished; revelation and prophecy became the order of the day; and the gifts of the Spirit—all those ancient signs and wonders and miracles—were poured out upon the faithful. Once more there were visions and tongues and prophecies; the sick were healed, the lame walked, the blind saw, and the dead were raised. It was with the Latter-day Saints as it had been with the former-day saints.

Line upon line the ancient truths were restored; one after another the ancient rites and ordinances were revealed anew. Soon the gospel, the fulness of the everlasting gospel—the very power of God which saves and exalts men—was shining forth in all its glory, beauty, and perfection. The gospel sun, which had its setting in the day when darkness covered the earth—that same gospel sun had its rising in the new day of restoration.

And with the gospel dawn and the spread of truth over all the earth, the terrors of the night are vanishing away. Where there was fear and ignorance and superstition, now there is love and light and pure religion. Fear has become courage; ignorance is transformed into wisdom; superstition and tradition are replaced by the light and truth of heaven.

Soon the wolves of wickedness will no longer howl and the jackals of sin no longer snivel and snipe at the ongoing kingdom, and the great millennial day will be upon us.

This is thy day, O Zion! "Arise,

shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. . . .

"His glory shall be seen upon thee.

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . .

"Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. . . .

"The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." (Isa. 60:1-3, 18-19.)

*"The morning breaks; the shadows flee;  
Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled! . . .  
The dawning of a brighter day  
Majestic rises on the world."  
(Hymns, no. 269.)*

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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Following Elder McConkie's address, the Choir sang, "The Lord's Prayer" without announcement.

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### President Spencer W. Kimball

We welcome those who have just joined us on television or radio for this, the First Session of the 148th Annual Conference of the Church.

President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, will now address us.

## President N. Eldon Tanner

First Counselor in the First Presidency

This morning we have enjoyed lovely music, and have had many truths explained to us, and as Jesus said "to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32.)

We have been greatly blessed also to have heard a message from the Lord's prophet, President Spencer W.

Kimball, whose words of truth we should all heed.

### Life eternal

Shortly before his betrayal and subsequent death and resurrection, our Savior spent some very sacred and solemn moments with his apostles, comforting them and revealing to them some of the events which would transpire, even though they did not fully understand or comprehend the meaning of his words. After intimating that they would soon be left alone—that is, without him—he spoke of the tribulation in the world, but admonished them to be of good cheer, for he had overcome the world. Then he lifted his eyes to heaven and said:

“Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee:

“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

*“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. . . .

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. . . .

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” (John 17:1-6, 8, 11; italics added.)

In these words we find some of the

greatest truths that have ever been uttered for the benefit and blessing of mankind. We learn that Jesus lived with his Father before the world was created; that he had been given a special work to do and was sent by his Father to the earth to perform that work; that there had been revealed to him the events which would transpire concerning his crucifixion and death and resurrection; that his apostles had been divinely called to assist in the work; that they had received and believed on the words which the Father sent to them through his Son; and it has been made abundantly clear that the Father and the Son, though separate beings, are one in purpose as he prayed his apostles might be.

In this petition to his Father, Jesus defined eternal life when he said: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3.) On another occasion he said: “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39.)

### Gaining exaltation

*Why is it so important for us to understand and accept these truths?*

Because without them we cannot hope to gain exaltation or eternal life. We must put first the spiritual side of our lives.

This is what Jesus meant when he said he had overcome the world—that he had kept the faith, that he had glorified his Father, that he had done all that had been required of him. Thus he was free from the bands of death and prepared to partake of immortality and eternal life with his Father.

This promise is for all. We read in John:

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;*

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32; italics added.)

## Freedom requires truth

Freedom is based on truth, and no man is completely free as long as any part of his belief is based on error, for the chains of error bind his mind. This is why it is so important for us to learn all the truth we can from all the sources we can. We need particularly to search the scriptures, for in them are the words which, if accepted and lived, will lead us to eternal life.

The scriptures give us evidence of the reality and personality of God and his Son, Jesus Christ. In order to believe in God it is necessary for us to understand his nature and attributes. Our faith in him must be based on true principles. Faith will avail us nothing if it is based on a false premise. For example, some of the early American colonists in dealing with the Indians gave them gunpowder to plant with the promise that they could raise a crop of gunpowder. In explicit faith the Indians planted the gunpowder, but of course they harvested nothing from their efforts because their faith was based on falsehood.

We are encouraged to study and pray and seek wisdom and to teach one another. We read in the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another *the doctrine of the kingdom*.

"Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; . . .

"That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.

"Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

"Therefore, they are left without

excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.

"He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken. . . .

"Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord comes." (D&C 88:77-78, 80-83, 86; italics added.)

## Obedience

We must know and understand the doctrines in order to be obedient, and we must be obedient in order to be free. This applies to the laws of God and the laws of the land. Too often we think of freedom only as the quality or state of being free from external restraint or compulsion, and not subject to the will of another, where we have the power of choice with every person free to "do his own thing," regardless of its effect on him or others.

Brigham Young made this statement:

"There is not a man of us but what is willing to acknowledge at once that God demands strict obedience to his requirements. But in rendering that strict obedience, are we made slaves? No, it is the only way on the face of the earth for you and me to become free, and we shall become slaves of our own passions, and of the wicked one, . . . and servants to the devil, if we take any other course." (*Journal of Discourses*, 18:246.)

The teachings of Jesus Christ, which have been given to us for our guidance and blessing, include the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Beatitudes. Interestingly enough, most of the laws of the land were taken from this same code of ethics. God's laws are based on truth and are unchangeable, and man cannot improve on them. We are blessed or punished according to our obedience.

There are certain immutable laws of nature which, if violated, will bring sickness or untimely death. By the same token we can apply the truths of scien-

tific law and reap the benefits of labor-saving devices, faster and more comfortable methods of transportation, convenience foods, and synthetic materials for our clothing and household items. All of these save us time and personal energy, and we should use our extra time and effort to further God's work as an expression of our appreciation for his goodness to us.

### Truth revealed by the light of Christ

We learn from the scriptures that all truth is revealed through the light of Christ, "which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—

"The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed." (D&C 88:12-13.)

Thus, the *truths* discovered by such men as Sir Isaac Newton, Thomas Edison, and Albert Einstein were actually revealed to them through the light of Christ. Such revealed truths have done much to free mankind from the slavery of ignorance and have extended the scope of our understanding of the universe. In like manner, through the power of the Holy Ghost, truths pertaining to the relationship of mankind to God and the mission of Jesus Christ have been made comprehensible.

To know that God the Father is a personal being, having a definite form with bodily parts and spiritual passions, and that Jesus Christ is his Begotten Son in the flesh and lived among men with the physical characteristics of a human being, are truths which give purpose to life, and free all who believe from the mysteries surrounding the origin of man.

Those who understand the truth about the atonement and resurrection of the Savior are free from mysteries and doubts regarding the ultimate destiny of man, and they know that by obedience to truth they are free to progress eternally and enjoy the glorious blessings of eternal life.

### Faith of a scientist

Dr. Henry Eyring, one of our leading scientists, makes this observation:

"The more I try to unravel the mysteries of the world in which we live, the more I come to the conception of a single overruling power—God. One can come to this point of view by prayer and the testimony of the Holy Ghost or because there seems to be no other explanation of the unity and wonder of the universe or by the pragmatic method of science that the Savior suggested long ago—try it and you will know.

"I have often met this question: 'Dr. Eyring, as a scientist, how can you accept revealed religion?' The answer is simple. The Gospel commits us only to the truth. The same pragmatic tests that apply in science apply to religion. Try it. Does it work? The conception of a God ruling the universe and concerned with how it works is impossible for me without the corollary that He should be interested in man, the most remarkable phenomenon in the world. Being interested in man, it is natural that He would provide a plan for man's development and welfare. This plan is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. . . .

"The significant thing about a scientist is this: he simply expects the truth to prevail because it IS the truth. . . . In science, the thing IS, and its being so is something one cannot resent. If a thing is wrong, nothing can save it, and if it is right, it cannot help succeeding.

"So it is with the Gospel." (Henry Eyring, *The Faith of a Scientist*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967, pp. 103, 105.)

### God knows all truth

To know that God the Eternal Father knows all truth and acts in accordance with it explains why he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. All that he does is in keeping with the unchanging truths of the universe. The same attributes are found in his Son,

Jesus Christ, who is "full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.)

One of the great differences between God and man is *God's greater knowledge of the truth*, which makes him *free* to create worlds and to control the universe.

We believe also that "as man now is, God once was: As God now is, man may be." (Lorenzo Snow, 11 January 1892, reprinted in *Latter-day Prophets Speak*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1951, p. 72.) Therefore, man should strive all his days to increase his intelligence and learn all the truths he can. He should realize that the gospel of Jesus Christ embraces all truth wherever it may be found, and as he gains knowledge and truth he should teach it to his fellowmen.

### Parents to teach children truth

Especially do parents have a responsibility to teach their children. A child must be taught the difference between right and wrong. Left on his own, the child may learn only the wrong. He needs guidance and instruction as to the consequences of his choices—why he will receive blessings for some and punishment for others.

Let us never forget that we are the architects of our own fates. God is not responsible for the consequences of our acts. He gives us the word—the truth—and the rules to follow and the opportunity to learn and to act and to progress. I like what the late President David O. McKay said regarding this:

"I believe that God is love, that He is our Father and desires the happiness and eternal life of His children. . . . He has placed man upon earth and . . . gave to man 'that he should be an agent unto himself.' [See D&C 29:35.] Men may choose the right or they may choose the wrong; they may walk in darkness or they may walk in the light; and, mind you, God has not left his children without the light. He has given them in the various dispensations of the world the light of the gospel wherein they could

walk and not stumble, wherein they could find that peace and happiness which he desires, as a loving father, his children should enjoy, but the Lord does not take from them their free agency.

"God is . . . deploring now the inevitable result of the follies, the transgressions and the sins of His wayward children, but we cannot blame Him for these any more than we can blame a father who might say to his son, 'There are two roads, my son, one leading to the right, one leading to the left. If you take the one to the left it will bring upon you misery and unhappiness and perhaps death. If you take the one to the right it will lead you to success and to happiness, but you choose which you will. You must choose; I will not force either upon you.'

"The young man starts out and, seeing the allurements and the attractiveness of the road to the left, and thinking it a shortcut to his happiness, he concludes to take it. The father knows what will become of him, he knows that not far from the flowery path there is a mire hole into which his boy will fall, he knows that after he struggles out of that mire hole he will come to a slough into which he will flounder. . . . He could see it long before the boy reached that condition, and he could, therefore, foretell it. The father loves the boy just the same, and still continues to warn him, and plead for him to return to the right path.

"God, too, has shown the world, through His prophets in ages gone by, that many of His people, individuals as well as nations, would choose the path that leads to misery and to death, and he foretold it; but the responsibility is upon those who would not heed God's message, not upon God." (Llewellyn McKay, *True to the Faith*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, pp. 86-87.)

### Warning and repentance

But for those who do not make the right choices, who may turn away from

the truth, God, in his infinite love and mercy, has made provision for their salvation through the glorious principle of repentance. Repentance embodies a recognition of the transgression, remorse, and a resolve to overcome. The Lord said:

"By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them." (D&C 58:43.)

From the beginning of time God's concern and love for his children has prompted him to warn them against the temptations of the enemy of truth and light, even Satan, who has committed himself, with his followers, to destroy mankind and thwart the plan of God to save his children. We could well apply to our day the following words which were spoken by a Book of Mormon prophet to his people, as he was moved upon by the Spirit of the Lord:

"Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time. . . .

"O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?" (Hel. 13:24, 29.)

But he also gave this assurance:

"But if ye will repent and return unto the Lord your God I will turn away mine anger, saith the Lord; yea, thus saith the Lord, Blessed are they who will repent and turn unto me, but wo unto him that repenteth not." (Hel. 13:11.)

### Promised blessings

May we all yearn for wisdom and for truth that we may inherit the kingdom of God and enjoy the promised blessings, for he said:

"The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth;

"And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

"He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things." (D&C 93:26-28.)

May we all accept God as our Father, and his Son Jesus Christ as our Savior, and keep his commandments and continue in our quest for truth, which will make us free and lead us to eternal life, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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The Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "O My Father" without announcement.

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### President Spencer W. Kimball

President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has just given the concluding address, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "O My Father."

We are grateful to the managers and operators of the many television and radio stations for offering their facilities as a public service to bring the proceedings of this conference to a large audience throughout many areas of the world.

We shall conclude this session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "O Be Joyful."

Following the singing, the benediction will be pronounced by Elder Royden G. Derrick, of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

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The number, "O Be Joyful," was rendered by the Tabernacle Choir.

Elder Royden G. Derrick offered the benediction.