

President Spencer W. Kimball

Beloved brethren and sisters, this has been a glorious conference. We are grateful to all who have taken part in any way. My heart has rejoiced, and my thoughts have been inspired to turn to many things, as what has been said and sung has deeply touched me.

Ready to move forward

Now, my brothers and sisters, it seems clear to me, indeed, this impression weighs upon me—that the Church is at a point in its growth and maturity when we are at last ready to move forward in a major way. Some decisions have been made and others pending, which will clear the way, organizationally. But the basic decisions needed for us to move forward, as a people, must be made by the individual members of the Church. The major strides which must be made by the Church will follow upon the major strides to be made by us as individuals.

We have paused on some plateaus long enough. Let us resume our journey forward and upward. Let us quietly put an end to our reluctance to reach out to others—whether in our own families, wards, or neighborhoods. We have been diverted, at times, from fundamentals on which we must now focus in order to move forward as a person or as a people.

Efforts of each member

Seemingly small efforts in the life of each member could do so much to move the Church forward as never before. Think, brothers and sisters, what would happen if each active family were to bring another family or individual into the Church before next April conference: We would be joined by several hundred thousand new members of the

Church. Imagine, if only one additional mature couple were to be called on a full-time mission from each ward—our missionary force would go from 27,500 to over 40,000! Contemplate the results if each family were to assist—between now and next April conference—an inactive family or individual into full activity. How we would revel in the association of those tens of thousands!

Think of the blessings here and on the other side of the veil if each holder of a temple recommend were to do just one more endowment this next year! And how would our non-member neighbors and friends feel if we were each to do just one more quiet act of Christian service for them before October conference—regardless of whether or not they are interested in the Church!

Imagine how much richer our family life would be if our spouses and children were to receive a few more minutes of individual attention each month!

Upsurge in spirituality

Are we ready, brothers and sisters, to do these seemingly small things out of which great blessings will proceed? I think we are. I believe the Lord's church is on the verge of an upsurge in spirituality. Our individual spiritual growth is the key to major numerical growth in the kingdom. The Church is ready to accomplish these things now which it could not have done just a few years ago. So also we are ready as members. If you will accept my counsel, you will come to feel that there is a readiness in our people which must be put to work.

Let us not shrink from the next steps in our spiritual growth, brothers

and sisters, by holding back, or side-stepping our fresh opportunities for service to our families and our fellowmen.

Let us trust the Lord and take the next steps in our individual lives. He has promised us that he will be our tender tutor, measuring what we are ready for:

“And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along” (D&C 78:18).

He will not ask us to bear more than we can bear nor thrust upon us that for which we are not yet ready. But likewise, we must not tarry too long when we are ready to move on.

Causes for holding back

It seems to me that basically there are two major causes for the holding back which we see in the Church: First, sin which results in disinterest or immobilization and guilt; and second, the reluctance of good members of the Church to stretch just a little bit more in the service, instead of being too slow to see the power of their example or too shy about letting their light shine. It is time for us all to take those seemingly small steps forward which will, when compounded, mean major progress for the Church!

The monumental challenge we face is to provide trained leadership for our fast-growing membership and to help that membership to keep clean from the world in which we must live.

The encroachment of the world into our lives is threatening. How hard it seems to many people to live *in* the world but not *of* the world.

Our constant prayer and our major efforts are to see that the members are sanctified through their righteousness. We urge our people to “stand in holy places” (D&C 87:8).

There may be some who have a general feeling of uneasiness because of world conditions and the lengthening shadows of evil. But the Lord said: “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

The gospel in the home

The gospel gives purpose to our lives. It is the way to happiness. Our success, individually and as a church, will largely be determined by how faithfully we focus on living the gospel in the home.

Only as we see clearly the responsibilities of each individual and the role of families and the home can we properly understand that the priesthood quorums and the auxiliary organizations, even wards and stakes, exist primarily to help members live the gospel in the home. However, church programs should always support and never detract from gospel-centered family activities.

Members should achieve personal and family preparedness, assisting and strengthening their own family members and others temporally and spiritually in the Lord’s way.

All should work together to make home a place where we love to be, a place of listening and learning, a place where each member can find mutual love, support, appreciation, and encouragement.

Let us “be of good cheer” (D&C 78:18), for the Lord will, as he has promised, lead us along and show us the way. He will help us as we decide from day to day on the allocation of our time and talent. We will move faster if we hurry less. We will make more real progress if we focus on the fundamentals. We will even come to know more as we serve more, for as we learn to *bear* more we are made ready to *hear* more (see John 16:12 and Mark 4:33).

The Lord has helped to make us

ready for major progress. Let us now go to and make the world ready for his coming!

Brothers and sisters, I've been so very much impressed with the sermons of the Brethren as they have poured out their souls to us in teaching us the principles of the gospel. They have been well defined and well explained.

Response to Jesus' question

I want to bring to your attention one or two of the scriptures that have been mentioned in the services already. For instance, this one:

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"

"And Simon Peter answered [for the others] and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:13-16.)

That is our message. That is what we are attempting to take to the world, to see that every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and every individual under heaven hears that message in a real, important way.

Now, continuing the quotation: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven [has revealed it to thee].

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:17, 19.)

And that explains to us the importance of our role as we go out into the world. We teach them the truths, teach them how to follow the

truths, and promise them these blessings which we have the authority from heaven to give to them.

Peter's testimony

I want to quote a few lines from Peter as he neared his demise:

"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (2 Pet. 1:14-20.)

And now another, more modern scripture I should like to add:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!"—and this you have heard many times during this conference from various serious-minded Brethren with a strong testimony.

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." (D&C 76:22-24.)

One more scripture: "But now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him" (Moses 1:11).

"Feed my sheep"

And then one other:

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17.)

Now the Lord has said that to every man, woman, and child in this congregation and in this world who has joined his church: "Lovest thou me?" Then show me! Show me: feed my sheep. We have in many of the lands of this world large, fast-growing, delightful, wonderful congregations; and we say to you again that the Lord is saying, "Feed my sheep." And he knows whether we are or not. He knows all the time. We don't need to put it into words; we don't need to express that for

ourselves. All we need to do is to feed his sheep.

Gospel teaching by adults

I might mention one more thing that Brother Haight mentioned—teaching the gospel by the adults. I think it is a matter that we have overlooked. We have rather forgotten, we older people, who have been retired and who have found an easy place to go with our camping outfit and with our other opportunities. We have found an easy way to satisfy our own thoughts and our own consciences that the work must go on—we will send our boys, we say.

I like the thought very much that Elder Haight mentioned: All of us have this responsibility. Not all of us are able, but many, many of us are. Hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints are able to preach the gospel in a careful, splendid way as the gospel is given to them.

The Lord has promised us that he would give us all the help and the strength and the inspiration that we need, and so all he says is, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." And there are thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of little sheep, little lambs that need feeding in all these countries in the world.

So we ask you again to do the things that we have suggested, brothers and sisters, such as keeping up your homes and writing in your journals. Every person should keep a journal and every person *can* keep a journal. It should be an enlightening one and should bring great blessings and happiness to the families. If there is anyone here who isn't doing so, will you repent today and change—change your life?

Now I should close. I wish to say to you, my brothers and sisters, we love you devotedly, we love you all, we appreciate all you do, and we just hope you will do more.

Saturday, March 31

First Day

We ask our Heavenly Father to give you power to extend your blessings to the people in your neighborhood who need them and to take the gospel to areas in the world that need those blessings now. We ask our Heavenly Father to be with you between now and our next conference and from then on. And we say again, Jesus is our light; he is our stay; he is our Savior and he lives; and we

bear this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang the hymn, "I need Thee Every Hour."

The benediction was offered by Elder Gene R. Cook.

GENERAL WELFARE SESSION

A General Welfare Services session was held in connection with General Conference on Saturday morning, March 31, 1979, at 7 o'clock. Invited to attend this meeting were General Authorities, regional representatives, stake presidencies, high councilors involved in welfare work, bishoprics, and stake and ward Relief Society presidencies, together with others responsible for operating welfare production projects.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at this session, and President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted it.

President Tanner opened the meeting with the following remarks:

President N. Eldon Tanner:

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this Conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We are happy to welcome you to

this General Welfare Services meeting, attended by general, and local, priesthood leaders, and sisters of the Relief Society. The matters to be presented at this meeting are of vital importance to the effectiveness of the welfare program. We, therefore, request that you instruct those under your direction in the things you will be taught here.

Under the direction of Brother Donald Ripplinger, with Brother Roy M. Darley at the organ, we shall begin this meeting by singing hymn No. 118, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

The invocation will be offered by Elder Robert L. Backman, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The congregation sang the hymn, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

Elder Robert L. Backman offered the invocation.
