

We are grateful to the Tabernacle ushers for seating the great audiences of these conference sessions in such a courteous manner.

We again express appreciation to the owners and managers of the many radio and television stations who have given public service time to carry sessions of this conference in the United States, Mexico, and Canada;

and by satellite to Australia, Central and South America, Spain, and Taiwan.

We thank the interpreters who have provided translation for the sessions of the conference.

We shall now hear from Elder Pinnock in Fayette, who will be followed by President Kimball.

Elder Hugh W. Pinnock

What a marvelous day this has been, and what an incredible age in which we live! For over a year I have thought of this great day—the dedication of these three buildings, the many people who have made these projects possible, and the remarkable effect of the restoration of the gospel upon the world.

Church growth explained

As we study this reinstatement and the theological basis of the Church, we will find ourselves thinking about the questions that so many others have asked. What is the explanation for the growth and the amazing influence of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? What does make Mormons different? Perplexed scholars, social critics, religionists, and cultural observers have given many answers. Their responses have ranged from describing the Church as a social abnormality that appeals to accomplishment-oriented people to such a simplistic idea as a conservative church always generates interest during troubled times.

However, the more deeply one wonders what makes us different from our nonmember friends and neighbors, the more certain is the answer: the Redeemer and other heavenly messengers personally restored the everlasting gospel to the earth. That is why we are here.

A poet so aptly said, "An honest tale speeds best being plainly told" (William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, act 4, sc. 4, line 358). That is my posture this day. The plain fact is that we believe the very same concepts that were revealed to the prophets ever since the world began. We utilize the same principles taught by the Master two thousand years ago.

As we study the Church today, we conclude that it is the same institution that was on the earth so many centuries ago. No other explanation is sensible. This is why scholars who attempt to relate the gospel of Jesus Christ to popular movements of the day, to a chance happening, or to other responses simply do not make sense, nor do they satisfy the longings of even the most naive seeker after truth.

Aspects of restored Church

An example: the Master, while speaking to his disciples in the Old World, said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). We have known for 150 years that the other sheep were those sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father living here in the Americas. These are they whom the

Savior visited after his resurrection. Their lives and trials are recorded in the Book of Mormon. No other logical explanation can be given for that verse in John. The restored gospel also offers explanations for so many other verses that have left biblical scholars mystified and struggling.

Yes, the Church is essentially an alien body implanted in fairly hostile territory. As the Savior advised, we are to be *in* the world but not part of it. We are to be loyal soldiers in this rebel world. Yes, we are different, and we must remain that way.

Why else would a group of people have the courage to respond almost unanimously to a man whom we know to be our prophet, seer, and leader, one who receives revelations continuously as needed? Similarities are found in the times of ancient Israel and again in the days of Jesus Christ. Where else is found a church that is structured with apostles and prophets, patriarchs, seventies, bishops, and teachers?

Here is a church that responds to the Savior's admonition, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, . . . for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). The great programs we have for our little ones assure them from their first consciousness that we love them and desire to teach them the truth.

Consider these additional aspects of the restored Church: a great women's program involving in meaningful ways over 400,000 of our sisters who are leading and teaching in various organizations; the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood, which involve the men and boys in a multiplicity of powerful and helpful ways; worship services on the first day of the week; holy temples where eternal marriage and other ordinances are performed, including baptism for the dead; a worldwide missionary system where in 30,000 men and women serve;

baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; an unpaid clergy ("freely ye have received, freely give" [Matt. 10:8]); teachings that stress the redeeming and positive in life; and an extensive welfare program to assist the poor and needy in dignity and love. The list goes on and on.

The events of this day further testify that the happenings of fifteen decades ago, which occurred here in western New York state, began a moral revolution that, as Daniel prophesied, would roll forth to eventually encompass the globe. (See Dan. 2).

Safety in the Church

There are other implications, however, that need to be stated. Where can one find spiritual, emotional, and economic safety in order to survive today's terrible cultural storms? The world is messy and bent on self-centeredness. Economic chaos and political instability are also part of today's environment, leaving uneasiness, insecurity, and turmoil in all of our lives. Fortunately, the Restoration gives us the panacea that mends, directs, corrects, and heals; but if we don't conform to this great God-given system, we will be like those unwise maidens who did not trim their wicks and fill their lamps with oil. We as a people are action-oriented and work-inclined. Conformance to this eternal system of energy expenditures does provide the only complete set of answers, which the world so desperately needs. May we be wise.

Four suggestions to show gratitude

A grateful and sensitive member of the Church could logically ask, "What may I do personally to express gratitude for all that I am and have because of my membership in

and affiliation with the kingdom of God?" Here are some suggestions:

First, utilize in personally helpful ways the advice and counsel of our prophet. One of our unique characteristics, as a people, is the fact that we have a divinely appointed leader, a heavenly designee, whose authoritative responsibility has persisted for 150 years, beginning at this very spot with the first elder of the Church, Joseph Smith. A prophet's words are designed to provide joy for us and for those we love, to include direction that will intensify our eternal effectiveness.

Second, become more expressive to our friends, family members, and neighbors concerning this great restoration. In a revelation given on this very day one and one-half centuries ago, Jesus expressed the necessity of being effective missionaries when he said, "That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved" (D&C 20:25).

Third, serve, as called, in the kingdom. In this same April 1830 revelation, the Lord said: "All those who . . . are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to *serve him to the end*, and truly manifest *by their works* that they have received of the Spirit of Christ . . . shall be received by baptism into his church" (D&C

20:37; italics added).

Fourth, walk "in holiness before the Lord" (D&C 20:69; see also 21:4). The Lord went on to say, a sesquicentennial ago, that "by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for *your good, and his name's glory*" (D&C 21:6; italics added). The most significant sermons we will ever preach will be through the acts we perform.

These are four simple steps, but from them can come happiness and *peace that surpass understanding*. To reiterate:

First, follow the loving counsel of our prophet and other Church leaders.

Second, teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Doesn't integrity demand that we tell others about this great restoration?

Third, serve the Master. Manifest our testimonies through our words and works.

Fourth, walk in holiness and live the commandments.

May each of us, as part of this great jubilee year and sesquicentennial celebration, conform our lives in building, loving, forgiving, and healing ways to express gratitude for all we have, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

This has been a glorious conference, my brothers and sisters! I have felt close to those of you in the Tabernacle, even though we are separated by a whole continent.

Greatness measured by deeds, service

This great sesquicentennial conference has brought us all close to the beginnings of this dispensation.

We have been refreshed because of those reminders. But even as we speak of beginnings, events in the world remind us that we are moving ever closer to the ending of this dispensation. So, for me, this conference has been filled with memories and also with anticipation—feelings which have combined to make me more grateful than ever for the privilege of being a part of this great latter-day work.