

teachings. I do not hesitate to promise, because I know from personal experience, that out of all of this will come, by the power of the Holy Ghost, a conviction, a testimony, a certain knowledge.

People of the world seem unable to believe it, so many of them. What they do not realize is that the things of God are understood only by the Spirit of God. There must be effort. There must be humility. There must be prayer. But the results are certain and the testimony is sure.

If our people, as individuals, ever lose that certitude, the Church will dwindle as so many others have. I have no fear of that. I am confident that an ever-enlarging membership will seek for and find that personal conviction which we call testimony, which comes by the power of the Holy Ghost, and which can weather the storms of adversity.

To those who vacillate, who equivocate, who qualify their assertions with uncertainty when speaking of the things of God, these words from the book of Revelation are appropriate:

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I

will spue thee out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:15-16.)

My brethren and sisters, as we begin this great conference, I not only invoke the blessings of the Lord upon you but with certitude give you my witness of the truth. I know that God our Eternal Father lives. I know that. I know that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of mankind, the author of our salvation. I know that this work of which we are a part is the work of God; that this is the Church of Jesus Christ. Great is our opportunity for service therein and strong and certain is our faith concerning it. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "The Lord Is My Shepherd" without announcement.

President Tanner

President Gordon B. Hinckley has just spoken to us, and the Choir has sung "The Lord Is My Shepherd."

We will now be pleased to hear from Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a new member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell

My brothers and sisters: I publicly express my deep gratitude to the Lord, to our remarkable and beloved President Kimball, and to his counselors for my call to the Twelve—among whom I shall be the least, long after being the last so ordained.

I express deep love and appreciation to my wife, who is splendid in every way; to my goodly and gracious parents and sisters; to my

children, who are committed to the kingdom and who have been wise enough to have married committed eternal partners.

Divine Redeemer, incomparable

I realize that my life, of course, must constitute my real acceptance of the apostolic charge. Even so, this poor tongue now seeks to speak in

praise and testimony of our Divine Redeemer.

Whether descriptively designated as Creator, Only Begotten Son, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Mediator, Son of God, Savior, Messiah, Author and Finisher of Salvation, King of Kings—I witness that Jesus Christ is the only name under heaven whereby one can be saved! (See D&C 18:23.)

I testify that He is utterly incomparable in what He *is*, what He *knows*, what He has *accomplished*, and what He has *experienced*. Yet, movingly, He calls us His friends. (See John 15:15.)

We can trust, worship, and even adore Him without any reservation! As the only Perfect Person to sojourn on this planet, there is none like Him! (See Isa. 46:9.)

In *intelligence* and *performance*, He far surpasses the individual and the composite *capacities* and *achievements* of all who have lived, live now, and will yet live! (See Abr. 3:19.)

He rejoices in our genuine goodness and achievement, but any assessment of where we stand in relation to Him tells us that we do not stand at all! We kneel!

Can we, even in the depths of disease, tell Him anything at all about suffering? In ways we cannot comprehend, our sicknesses and infirmities were borne by Him even before these were borne by us. (See Alma 7:11-12; Matt. 8:17.) The very weight of our combined sins caused Him to descend below all. (See D&C 122:8.) We have never been, nor will we be, in depths such as He has known. Thus His atonement made His empathy and His capacity to succor us perfect, for which we can be everlastingly grateful as He tutors us in our trials. There was no ram in the thicket at Calvary to spare Him, this Friend of Abraham and Isaac.

Can those who yearn for hearth or home instruct Him as to what it is like to be homeless or on the move? Did He not say in a disclosing moment that

“the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head”? (Matt. 8:20.)

Can we really counsel Him about being misrepresented, misunderstood, or betrayed? Or what it is like when even friends falter or “go a fishing”? (See John 21:3.)

Can we educate Him regarding injustice or compare failures of judicial systems with the Giver of the Law, who, in divine dignity, endured its substantive and procedural perversion?

And when we feel so alone, can we presume to teach Him who trod “the wine-press alone” anything at all about feeling forsaken? (D&C 76:107; see also Matt. 27:46.)

Cannot the childless who crave children count on His empathy? For He loved children and said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven”; and “one by one, [He] blessed them,” and “he wept . . . and prayed unto the Father for them. And when he had done this he wept again.” (Matt. 19:14; 3 Ne. 17:21-22.)

Can we instruct or enlighten the Atoner?

Do we presume to instruct Him in either compassion or mercy? Even at the apogee of His agony upon the cross, He, nevertheless, consoled a thief beside Him, saying, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43.)

Can we excuse our compromises because of the powerful temptations of status seeking? It was He who displayed incredible integrity as the adversary made Him an offer which could not be refused—“all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” (Matt. 4:8.) But He refused!

Can we teach Him about enduring irony? His remaining possession, a cloak, was gambled for even as He died. (See Matt. 27:35.) Yet the very earth was His footstool! Jesus gave

mankind living water so that we shall never thirst again, yet on the cross He was given vinegar! (See John 4:10-19; Matt 27:48.)

Can we lecture Him on liberty, He who sets us free from our last enemies—sin and death?

Can those who revere human freedom yet complain about human suffering ever achieve real reconciliation except through His gospel?

Can those concerned with nourishing the poor advise Him concerning feeding the multitudes?

Can those who are concerned with medicine instruct Him about healing the sick?

Or can we inform the Atoner about feeling the sting of ingratitude when one's service goes unappreciated or unnoticed? Only one leper in ten thanked Jesus, who asked searchingly, "But where are the nine?" (Luke 17:17.)

Should those concerned with lengthening the lifespan offer to enlighten the Resurrector of all mankind?

Can scientists, whose discipline brings the discovery of the interweavings in the tapestry of truth, instruct the Tapestry Maker?

Should we seek to counsel Him in courage? Should we rush forth eagerly to show Him our mortal medals—our scratches and bruises—He who bears His five special wounds?

His "word of power"

Does not His "word of power" actually bring entire new worlds into being and cause others to pass away? (See Moses 1:35-38.) Yet in the midst of such galactic governance, He interviewed His Twelve unhurriedly "one by one" (3 Ne. 28:1) and later called a farm boy in rural New York.

Has He not invited us to observe His cosmic craftsmanship in the heavens that we might see "God moving in His majesty and power"? (D&C 88:47.) But do we not also see Him

"moving in His majesty and power" as each prodigal finally completes his homeward orbit?

Though His creations are so vast as to be numberless even to computerized man, has Jesus not told us that the very hairs of our head are numbered? (See Matt. 10:30; Moses 1:35-38.)

Did not the resurrected Jesus stand by an imprisoned Paul, telling him to be of good cheer and calling him on his mission to Rome? (See Acts 23:11.) Likewise, Jesus stands by the righteous in all their individual ordeals.

Did not this good and true Shepherd forego repose after the glorious but awful Atonement in order to establish His work among the lost sheep, disobedient in the days of Noah? (See 1 Pet. 3:18-20.) Did He not then visit still other lost sheep in the Americas? (See John 10:16; 3 Ne. 15:17, 21.) Then still other lost sheep? (See 3 Ne. 16:1-3.) What can we tell Him about conscientiousness?

Fulness of His ministry

Indeed, we cannot teach Him anything! But we can listen to Him. We can love Him, we can honor Him, we can worship Him! We can keep His commandments, and we can feast upon His scriptures! Yes, we who are so forgetful and even rebellious are never forgotten by Him! We are His "work" and His "glory," and He is never distracted! (See Moses 1:39.)

Therefore, in addition to my boundless admiration of His achievements and my adoration of Jesus for what He is—knowing that my superlatives are too shallow to do more than echo his excellence—as one of His Special Witnesses in the fulness of times, I attest to the fulness of His ministry!

How dare some treat His ministry as if it were all beatitudes and no declaratives! How myopic it is to view His ministry as all crucifixion and no

resurrection! How provincial to perceive it as all Calvary and no Palmyra! All rejection at a village called Capernaum and no acceptance in the City of Enoch! All relapse and regression in ancient Israel and no Bountiful with its ensuing decades of righteousness!

Jesus Christ is the Jehovah of the Red Sea and of Sinai, the Resurrected Lord, the Spokesman for the Father in the theophany at Palmyra—a Palmyra pageant with a precious audience of one!

He lives today, mercifully granting unto all nations as much light as they can bear and messengers of their own to teach them. (See Alma 29:8.) And who better than the Light of the World can decide the degree of divine disclosure—whether it is to be flashlights or floodlights?

True story of mankind

Soon, however, all flesh shall see Him together. All knees shall bow in His presence, and all tongues confess His name. (See D&C 76:110-11; Philip. 2:10-11.) Knees which never before have assumed *that* posture for *that* purpose will do so then—and promptly. Tongues which have never before spoken His name except in gross profanity will do so then—and worshipfully.

Soon, He who was once mockingly dressed in purple will come again, attired in red apparel, reminding us whose blood redeemed us. (See D&C 133:48-49.)

All will then acknowledge the completeness of His justice and His mercy (see Alma 12:15) and will see how human indifference to God—not God's indifference to humanity—accounts for so much suffering.

Then we will see the true story of mankind—and not through glass darkly. (See 1 Cor. 13:12.) The great military battles will appear as mere bonfires which blazed briefly, and the mortal accounts of the human experi-

ence will be but graffiti on the walls of time.

Before that reckoning moment, however, both your ministry and mine will unfold in the grim but also glorious circumstances of the last days.

Circle of certitude

Yes, there will be wrenching polarization on this planet, but also the remarkable reunion with our colleagues in Christ from the City of Enoch. Yes, nation after nation will become a house divided, but more and more unifying Houses of the Lord will grace this planet. Yes, Armageddon lies ahead. But so does Adam-ondi-Ahman!

Meanwhile, did not Jesus tell us what to expect by way of heat in the final summer? Did He not also say that He would prove our faith and patience by trial?

Did He not provide needed proportion when He spoke of the comparative few who will find the narrow way leading to the strait gate? (See Matt. 7:13-14.) Did He not also say that His Saints, scattered upon all the face of the earth, would, in the midst of wickedness, commotion, and persecution, be "armed with righteousness and with the power of God," for He is determined to have "a pure people"? (1 Ne. 14:12-14; D&C 100:16.)

His work proceeds forward almost as if in the comparative calmness of the eye of a storm. First, He reigns in the midst of His saints; soon, in all the world! (See D&C 1:36; 133:2-3.)

So as the shutters of human history begin to close as if before a gathering storm, and as events scurry across the human scene like so many leaves before a wild wind—those who stand before the warm glow of the gospel fire can be permitted a shiver of the soul. Yet in our circle of certitude, we know, even in the midst of all these

things, that there will be no final frustration of God's purposes. God has known "all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men." (1 Ne. 9:6.)

Humbly, therefore, I promise to go whithersoever I am sent, striving to speak the words He would have me say and acknowledging in the tremblings of my soul that I cannot fully be His Special Witness unless my life is fully special. I close with pleadings from the hymn "O, Divine Redeemer!" which pleadings are my pleadings:

*Ah! turn me not away,
Receive me, tho' unworthy, . . .
Hear Thou my cry, . . .
Behold, Lord, my distress! . . .
Thy pity show in my deep
anguish! . . .
Shield me in danger,
O regard me! . . .
O, divine Redeemer! . . .
Grant me pardon, and remember not,
remember not, O Lord, my sins! . . .
Help me, my Savior!
(Charles Gounod, New York: G.
Schirmer.)*

In the holy name of Jesus Christ,
amen.

Elder Richard G. Scott

The Lord's plan

Our son has a small toy robot. It can walk and perform other simple functions. Should it fall, it can, with some difficulty, right itself. It performs its programmed functions mechanically, without feeling. Yet, it has no capacity to grow or to alter its destined course. It responds immediately to any external force that satisfies its needs, and ceases to function when its internal spring is spent. Satan would have all of the children of Father in Heaven behave like robots.

The Choir sang "Faith of Our Fathers" without announcement.

President Tanner

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Twelve Apostles has just spoken to us, and the Choir has sung "Faith of Our Fathers."

The congregation will please sing "Come, Ye Children of the Lord."

The congregation joined the Tabernacle Choir in singing "Come, Ye Children of the Lord."

President Tanner

Elder Richard G. Scott of the First Quorum of the Seventy will speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

How different is the plan of the Lord. Consider the birth of an infant—an independent spirit created by God (see Moses 6:36) and matured in the premortal existence, tabernacled in a body of flesh and bones. A mother and father participate with God in this sacred experience. These parents love, guide, and inspire the growing child. With proper understanding of and obedience to the teachings of the Savior, the child learns "precept upon precept" (see D&C 98:12), and by practice of truth, is converted into a self-reliant, loving, serving son or daughter