
The Choir sang "Lead, Kindly Light."

Elder M. Russell Ballard offered the invocation.

The Choir sang "Praise to the Lord" without announcement.

President Romney

The Tabernacle Choir has sung "Praise to the Lord."

President Spencer W. Kimball has prepared a keynote address for this general conference, which will now be read by his personal secretary, D. Arthur Haycock.

President Spencer W. Kimball

(Read by his personal secretary, D. Arthur Haycock)

My beloved brothers and sisters, I am deeply grateful for the privilege of meeting with you once again in a general conference of the Lord's church. I look forward to, and draw strength from, these general conferences, and I am anxious to receive the counsel and instructions given to us under the inspiration of the Lord. I find that if I listen carefully and heed all that is said, my life is enriched and my inner soul is nourished with the bread of life.

Grateful for Choir

This wonderful Tabernacle Choir has just sung to us, and they add so much to the spirit and enjoyment of our conference sessions. The Choir recently celebrated another anniversary, more than a half-century of "Music and the Spoken Word," the longest continuous radio broadcast in the free world. As I listen to the lovely melodies of the Tabernacle Choir and organ, I am comforted by the assurance that there will be beautiful music in heaven, and for that I am most grateful. Some say there will be no music in that other place—but then some sounds that pass for music probably belong in that other place!

Report of activities

The past six months have not been the most active of times for Sister Kimball and me. As you are aware, we have been somewhat restricted due to a condition known as growing older. I believe I now understand a bit more clearly what is meant by enduring to the end. It is difficult and frustrating not to be able to do all that I would like to do. Nevertheless, I still do many things. Almost daily I join with my Brethren for meetings at the Church office, and I meet every Thursday in the temple with the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve.

I have enjoyed some extracurricular activities as well. During the summer, Sister Kimball and I attended the Salt Lake Valley Dance Festival. We rode in the days of '47 Pioneer Parade and attended the rodeo. Last Saturday, we joined with 65,000 others at the BYU-Air Force football game at the newly expanded BYU stadium in Provo.

Support during advancing years

I am grateful for my able and devoted Counselors, President Tanner, President Romney, and President

Hinckley. As I reflect upon the great loyalty and love these men extend to me daily, I am reminded of an experience that Moses had during his advancing years. The Israelites were contending with the Amalekites, "and it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

"But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron [his brother] and Hur [the husband of his sister, Miriam] stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." (Exodus 17:11-12.)

Surely Moses had no greater support than that which I receive from my beloved Brethren. I am thankful, too, for President Benson and the members of the Council of the Twelve and the other General Authorities, all of whom labor so diligently in the Lord's vineyard. I am sorry, however, that my dear friend Elder LeGrand Richards is not with us this morning. He has been sitting here on this stand since 1938.

I am gratified with the growth of the Church around the world, for the nearly fifty new stakes which have been approved or created since we were in general conference last April, and for the groundbreaking that have occurred for the building of five more temples. These are all important indicators of the growth of the kingdom. I hope and pray always for the spiritual as well as the numerical growth of the Lord's church.

Wickedness in the world

My brothers and sisters, there seems to be a general state of wickedness in the world in these perilous yet crucially momentous days. But in the midst of all the turmoil

about us, we can have an inner peace. We are richly blessed and have so much to be thankful for. As I meditate upon these things, I remember the words of the Lord, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required" (Luke 12:48). The Lord expects of us righteousness and obedience to His commandments in return for the bounties of life He has so richly bestowed upon us. It seems that iniquity abounds on all sides, with the Adversary taking full advantage of the time remaining to him in this day of his power. The leaders of the Church continually cry out against that which is intolerable in the sight of the Lord: against pollution of mind and body and our surroundings; against vulgarity, stealing, lying, cheating, false pride, blasphemy, and drunkenness; against fornication, adultery, homosexuality, abortion, and all other abuses of the sacred power to create; against murder and all that is like unto it; against all manner of degradation and sin.

Warning and call to repentance

As Latter-day Saints we must ever be vigilant. The way for each person and each family to guard against the slings and arrows of the Adversary and to prepare for the great day of the Lord is to hold fast to the iron rod, to exercise greater faith, to repent of our sins and shortcomings, and to be anxiously engaged in the work of His kingdom on earth, which is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Herein lies the only true happiness for all our Father's children. We invite all men and women of good will everywhere to join in this divine and redeeming latter-day work.

Let us honor our families and enjoy our happy homes. As I speak to you of home and family, I desire to give some further counsel

regarding the safety and well-being of your loved ones. There is a growing evil in our nation—the kidnaping of children. Our hearts go out in love and sympathy and compassion to all who have been thus bereft of precious little ones. I implore you mothers and fathers of Zion to keep a constant watchcare over your children. Teach them to beware of the growing danger of evil and designing men and pray ever for your children's welfare. The Devil is not dead, nor does he sleep.

The Savior loved little children. He often spoke of them, and He called them, like lambs, to His side, and He blessed them. And He said, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:6.)

I call upon all who, for whatever reason or purpose, have torn a little child from the arms of its mother, to repent and hearken to my plea. I pray that the tears and pleadings of loved ones will soften their hearts so that they may be constrained to return these little ones to the bosom of their grieving families.

Obligation to share the gospel

My brothers and sisters, the day for carrying the gospel to ever more places and people is here and now. We must come to think of our obligation to share the message rather than of our own convenience. Calls from the Lord are seldom convenient. The time is here when sacrifice must become an even more important element in the Church. We must increase our devotion so that we can do the work the Lord has for us to do. There is a growing need for more missionaries now that the term of service is shorter—but they must be those who have a desire to go and

who have been carefully trained and prepared through the family and the various Church organizations. Young men, with the encouragement of their parents, should begin early in life to prepare with the spirit of saving, with the spirit of studying and praying about the gospel, with the spirit of attending seminary and institute classes. And of prime importance is preparation by keeping their lives clean and worthy. The parting words of the Master to His Apostles just before His Ascension were, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16.)

We must not falter nor weary in well-doing. We must lengthen our stride. Not only is our own eternal welfare at stake, but also the eternal welfare of many of our brothers and sisters who are not now members of this, the true Church. I thrill to the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith in a letter that he sent to the Church from Nauvoo on September 6, 1842: "Shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward. . . . Courage. . . and on, on to the victory!" (D&C 128:22.)

Latter-day testimonies of Jesus Christ

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, there are some in the world who mistakenly say that we are a non-Christian Church—a cult; that we worship Joseph Smith rather than our Savior, Jesus Christ. How far from the truth they are! What heresy! The Lord declared, "For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (D&C 115:4).

We have a hope in Christ here and now. He died for our sins.

Because of Him and His gospel, our sins are washed away in the waters of baptism; sin and iniquity are burned out of our souls as though by fire; and we become clean, we have a clear conscience, and we gain that peace which passeth understanding.

We *believe*, and it is our testimony, and we proclaim it to the world, "that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent" (Mosiah 3:17).

We *know*, and it is our testimony, and we proclaim it to the world, that to be saved men must "believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent" (Mosiah 3:18).

"And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins" (2 Nephi 25:26).

For the past century and a half since the Restoration, beginning with the Prophet Joseph Smith, the latter-day prophets of God have raised their voices in clarity and with authority and truth as they have borne their testimonies of the divinity of this

great latter-day work and the redemptive power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To the testimonies of these mighty men I add my testimony. I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that He was crucified for the sins of the world. He is my friend, my Savior, my Lord, and my God. With all my heart I pray that the Saints may keep His commandments, have His Spirit to be with them, and gain an eternal inheritance with Him in celestial glory.

As we begin this conference let us wait upon the Lord for His blessing and His divine approbation. I pray the Lord to bless you; and as His servant, I bless you. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "Come unto Jesus" without announcement.

President Romney

We have just heard an address prepared by President Spencer W. Kimball, which was read by his personal secretary, D. Arthur Haycock, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Come unto Jesus."

We shall now be pleased to listen to President Gordon B. Hinckley.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

My brethren and sisters, I am confident that I speak for all of you when I express appreciation to President Kimball for his message just read by his able and faithful secretary, D. Arthur Haycock.

Testimony and thanks to Church members

Thank you, President Kimball, for your counsel, and particularly for your testimony of God our Eternal