

his Firstborn of spirit children, his Only Begotten in the flesh, to be an earthly example for us, to take upon himself the sins of the world, and subsequently to be crucified for the sins of the world and be resurrected. It was he who said:

“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

“But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

“Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men” (D&C 19:16–19).

And again he said: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25–26).

It is truly a beautiful message—there will be life after death; we can return to live with our Father in Heaven once again, because of the sacrifice the Savior has made for us, and because of our own repentance and obedience to the commandments.

In the glorious dawn of Easter morning, when the thoughts of the Christian world are turned to the resurrection of Jesus for a few fleeting moments, let us express appreciation to our Heavenly Father for the great plan of salvation that has been provided for us. We should turn toward unselfishness and careful adherence to the principles of righteousness. In doing so, let us remember that the time of preparation is growing short, that soon the Savior will return. As the Apostle Paul has said: “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come” (Hebrews 10:37).

That we may be found worthy at his coming is my prayer in his name, amen.

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The Choir sang “All Glory, Laud and Honor” without further announcement.

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### President Benson

Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has spoken to us, following which the Tabernacle Choir sang “All Glory, Laud and Honor.”

President Marion G. Romney has prepared a message to be delivered at this time and has requested that it be read by his son, Bishop George J. Romney.

## President Marion G. Romney

(Read by his son, George J. Romney)

### Unity, oneness, equality

One of the central themes of the gospel of Jesus Christ is unity. The scriptures teach that equality and oneness should prevail among members of the Church.

You will recall that on the night of the Last Supper, as the Savior met with

his Apostles, he prayed that they might be one with him, as he was one with the Father. He prayed not for them alone, “but for them also which [should] believe on [him] through their word;

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the

world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21).

Always the aim has been unity, oneness, and equality among the members of the Church of Christ. As an example, I call your attention to the record of Enoch, how he and his people reached a state of unity when the rest of the world was at war.

"And there went forth a curse upon all people that fought against God;

"And from that time forth there were wars and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness.

"The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land. . . .

"And the Lord called his people Zion." Why? "*Because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them*" (Moses 7:15-18; italics added).

During his mortal ministry Jesus taught his disciples the same doctrine. After his ascension, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

#### "Of one heart and of one soul"

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" (Acts 4:31-32).

After the resurrected Savior's ministry among the Nephites, they "were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.

"*And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of*

*the heavenly gift*" (4 Nephi 2-3; italics added).

#### Out of harmony with leaders—an indefensible position

Today we are the Church of Christ, and the Lord expects us to come to this same unity. He has said to us: "Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine" (D&C 38:27).

Some members assume that one can be in full harmony with the spirit of the gospel, enjoy full fellowship in the Church, and at the same time be out of harmony with the leaders of the Church and the counsel and direction they give. Such a position is wholly inconsistent, because the guidance of this Church comes not alone from the written word but also from continuous revelation, and the Lord gives that revelation to the Church through his chosen prophet. It follows, therefore, that those who profess to accept the gospel and who at the same time criticize and refuse to follow the counsel of the prophet are assuming an indefensible position. Such a spirit leads to apostasy. It is not new. It was prevalent in the days of Jesus and in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

It is good to remember the great lesson the Savior taught the Nephites on this subject as he began his ministry among them. Said he:

"There shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been.

"For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another" (3 Nephi 11:28-29).

#### Seek the Lord's will—then do it

There is but one way that we can be united, and that way is to seek the

Lord and his righteousness. (See 3 Nephi 13:33.) Unity comes by following the light from above. It does not come out of the confusions below. While men depend upon their own wisdom and walk in their own way, without the guidance of the Lord they cannot live in unity. Neither can they come to unity by following uninspired men.

The way to unity is for us to learn the will of the Lord and then to do it. Until this basic principle is understood and observed, there will be no unity and peace on the earth. The power of the Church for good in the world depends upon the extent to which we, the members thereof, observe this principle.

The major reason for the world's troubles today is that men are not seeking to know the will of the Lord and then to do it. Rather do they seek to solve their problems in their own wisdom and in their own way. The Lord, in the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which he revealed as the preface to the book of his commandments, pointed this out and marked it as one of the causes of the calamities which he foresaw coming upon the inhabitants of the earth. Listen to this ringing declaration:

"They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

"They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way" (D&C 1:15-16).

### **Unity through scriptures and the prophet**

Brethren and sisters, do not rely upon the counsel of men nor trust in the arm of flesh (see D&C 1:19), but seek the Lord to establish his righteousness (see D&C 1:16).

We of this Church can come to a unity and a oneness which will give us strength beyond anything we have yet enjoyed if we will obtain a sounder understanding of the principles of the

gospel and come to a unity in our interpretations of present world conditions and trends. This we can do by prayerful study of the Lord's word, including that given to us through the living prophet.

This is the way to come to a unity. If we will study the word of the Lord as it comes to us through the standard works and through the instructions of the living prophet and not harden our hearts, but humble ourselves and develop a real desire to understand its application to us in our own peculiar circumstances, and then ask the Lord in faith, believing that we shall receive (see D&C 18:18), all the while being diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord, surely the path we should follow will be made known unto us, and we will be able to face the world as a solid unit.

### **Opportunity to rise heavenward**

Surely we need this unity and this strength in this day in which we live. We have a great opportunity, the opportunity to rise heavenward, to gain the spirit of the gospel as we have never enjoyed it before. This we can do by developing among us that unity required by the laws of the celestial kingdom.

If, in the expediency of the moment, we set God aside to follow the teachings of men, we disown him.

Only a united people, keeping God's commands, can expect the protection which he alone can give when the floods come, and the rains descend, and the winds blow, and beat upon our house. (See Matthew 7:25.)

It is my conviction that, since we are engaged in the Lord's work, we can accomplish everything he requires us to do if we will but be united. That we may so be, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### **President Benson**

Bishop, would you carry to your father our deep appreciation for this