

President Gordon B. Hinckley

My brethren and sisters, ordinarily President Spencer W. Kimball would be occupying this position. I am satisfied that many of you were seriously disappointed that you have not had the opportunity of seeing him or hearing from him on this occasion. As I indicated yesterday morning, he is showing the effects of his advanced age and the rigorous life which he has lived. However, he rises each day and dresses, and we consult with him frequently. If President Kimball could not be here, President Romney would be doing this. But he isn't here, either. And as President Romney remarked last October at the priesthood meeting, "It looks as if they've left it to the kids."

Great worldwide church

You will now be returning to your homes. Many of you will return to the various nations of Europe, to Africa, and to the many nations of South America. Others will return to Australia and New Zealand and the islands of the Pacific, to Mexico and Central America, and to the lands of Asia. Many will return to their homes in Canada and across the United States. The miracle of this work as it spreads over the earth never escapes me. I took occasion here to open the testimony of Joseph Smith concerning the words spoken to him when a young man seventeen years of age. He was visited by Moroni in the night, and he reports, "He [Moroni] called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people" (Joseph Smith—History 1:33).

We see in this congregation today a fulfillment of those remarkable

words of prophecy. This has become a great, cosmopolitan church. We rejoice in the tremendous growth of the work across the world. We are thankful for your great faith and faithfulness. We all look upon one another as brothers and sisters, regardless of the land we call home. We belong to what may be regarded as the greatest society of friends on the face of the earth.

Fellowship of the Saints

When the emperor of Japan was in the United States some few years ago, I attended a luncheon for him in San Francisco. We sat at a table with three other couples who had had extensive experience in Japan and who had resided there at one time or another while working in government, business, or educational employment. One of the gentlemen said to me, "I have never seen anything like your people. We had many Americans come to Japan while we were there, and most of them experienced a severe cultural adjustment and much loneliness and homesickness. But whenever we had a Mormon family come, they had many instant friends. Members of your church in Japan seemed to know when they were expected and were there to welcome them. They and their children were immediately integrated socially as well as into your religious community. There seemed to be no culture shock and no loneliness. My wife and I talked about it many times."

That is the way it should be. We must be friends. We must love and honor and respect and assist one another. Wherever Latter-day Saints go, they are made welcome, because Latter-day Saints are mutual believers in the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and are engaged together in his great cause.

We speak of the fellowship of the Saints. This is and must be a very real thing. We must never permit this

spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood to weaken. We must constantly cultivate it. It is an important aspect of the gospel.

Basic declaration of our theology

Now, brethren and sisters, we have had a wonderful conference, a marvelous conference. All who have spoken have done so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The music has been superb. We are deeply grateful to all who have participated—speakers, those who have offered prayers, and those who have lifted our souls with music.

As we return to our homes let us contemplate the things we have heard. Let us go with resolution and determination to more fully live the gospel. "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things" (Article of Faith 13).

That article of our faith is one of the basic declarations of our theology. During this great conference we have been reminded of many of the virtues set forth in that brief statement. We ought to reflect on it again and again. I wish that every family in the Church would write out that article of faith and put it on a mirror where every member of the family would see it every day. Then, whenever we might be tempted to do anything shoddy or dishonest or immoral, there would come into our minds with some force this great, all-encompassing statement of the ethics of our behavior. There would be less rationalizing over some elements of our personal conduct which we try to justify with one excuse or another.

Brethren advocating reading from Gospels and Third Nephi

Some would have us believe that the area between good and evil is largely gray and that it is difficult to determine what is right and what is wrong. For any who so believe, I recommend this beautiful statement of Moroni found in the Book of Mormon: "For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for everything which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God" (Moroni 7:16).

Let us establish in our lives the habit of reading those things which will strengthen our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. He is the pivotal figure of our theology and our faith. Every Latter-day Saint has the responsibility to know for himself or herself with a certainty beyond doubt that Jesus is the resurrected, living Son of the living God. The Brethren of the Council of the Twelve are advocating that we read a chapter a day of the Gospels—that is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Bible; and Third Nephi in the Book of Mormon, particularly beginning with the eleventh chapter of Third Nephi where is found the account of Christ's visit among the Nephites in this hemisphere. I should like to endorse this program and commend it to you and urge you to follow it.

"Fear not to do good"

Brethren and sisters, we have nothing to fear if we stay on the Lord's side. If we will be prayerful, seeking wisdom from God, who is the source of all true wisdom; if we will cultivate a spirit of love and peace and harmony in our homes; if we will fulfill our assigned responsibilities in the Church with enthusiasm and faithfulness; if we

will reach out to our neighbors and others in a spirit of Christian love and appreciation, helping those in distress wherever we may find them; if we will be honest with the Lord in the payment of our tithes and offerings, we shall be blessed as God has promised. Our Father has made explicit covenants with his people. He is in a position to keep those covenants. It is my testimony that he does so.

May I read to you in conclusion these great, reassuring words given by the Lord long ago to this people: "Fear not to do good, my sons, for whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap. . . .

"Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. . . .

"Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not" (D&C 6:33-34, 36).

Love and blessing of First Presidency and other Brethren

In closing I give to you the love and blessing of President Spencer W.

Kimball, of his Counselor President Marion G. Romney, and of all of my Brethren of the General Authorities. To this I add my own expression to you of gratitude for your sustaining influence, for your devoted service, and for your expressions of faith. May the Lord bless you generously, as he will if you will walk in faith. For this I humbly pray as I leave with you my testimony and witness that I know that God our Eternal Father lives, that Jesus is the Christ, the living resurrected Savior of mankind, and that this Church in which we have the honor to serve is their church restored to the earth for the blessing of all of our Father's children who will give heed to its message. God bless you. May he be with you in all things, at all times, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "God Be with You."

Elder George P. Lee offered the benediction.

SALT LAKE TABERNACLE CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

The following broadcast, announced by J. Spencer Kinard and originating with KSL Radio and Television, Salt Lake City, Utah, was presented from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 3, 1983, through the courtesy of the Columbia Broadcasting System's network throughout the United States, parts of Canada, and through other facilities to several points overseas:

Announcer: Once more we welcome you within these walls with Music and

the Spoken Word from the crossroads of the West.

CBS and its affiliated stations bring you at this hour the Mormon Tabernacle Choir from Temple Square in Salt Lake City, with Jerald Ottley conducting the Choir, John Longhurst, Tabernacle organist, and the Spoken Word given by Spencer Kinard.

(Choir without announcement: "Halleluiah Sing!"—Wilkinson)

Announcer: "Christ, the Lord is ris'n, Halleluiah Sing." The Tabernacle Choir has sung these words in praise of