

the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy because of his call to preside over the Washington (D.C.) Temple, will now address us. He will

be followed by Bishop H. Burke Peterson, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

Elder Franklin D. Richards

My dear brothers and sisters—yes, ye are all brothers and sisters—the counsel of my Brethren, as well as the beautiful music and the opening prayer, have made this a most inspirational meeting.

The Lord has sustained me

When I was called to be a General Authority twenty-three years ago, my response in this beautiful Tabernacle was: "I have love in my heart this morning, President McKay, for you and my brethren that are presiding over the affairs of the kingdom of God, and I have love in my heart for my fellowmen. I can truthfully say that I have no enmity nor hatred toward any man, and I pray that the Lord will sustain me in this position" (in Conference Report, Oct, 1960, p. 47).

Yes, the Lord has truly sustained me in this position, for which I am truly grateful.

At the October 1976 general conference, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve restructured the First Quorum of the Seventy. I have served as one of the Presidency of this quorum for the past seven years. This has been a choice experience as our quorum of forty-seven members has served in many capacities both at the headquarters of the Church and throughout the world. I commend them for their dedication and effective service.

With humble hearts and firm commitment

As has just been explained, I have been called to be the president of the

Washington (D.C.) Temple, and my wife, Helen, has been called to serve as matron of the temple.

We are grateful for the confidence placed in us by our Father in Heaven, the First Presidency, and our Brethren.

We approach this assignment with humble hearts and with full commitment to devote our best efforts to the building of the kingdom of God.

A message of peace

We are living in a period in which there are wars and rumors of wars among nations and much hatred, conflict, and contention among people.

It seems to me the most pressing need in the world today is peace—not only among nations, but also within families and in our social and business relationships.

From the Passover Feast of nineteen centuries ago came this great message of promise and exhortation from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Jesus Christ is called the Prince of Peace (see Isaiah 9:6), and his message is a message of peace to the individual and to the world. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the plan of life that will restore peace to the world, remove inner tensions and troubles, and bring happiness to the human soul. It is the greatest philosophy of life ever given to man.

Need for peacemakers

A mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to establish this peace and happiness in the hearts and homes of the people.

Certainly one of the greatest messages given to man by Jesus Christ is known as the Sermon on the Mount.

Practically all of the basic principles in man's relationship with others are contained in this great sermon.

Part of this sermon is referred to as the Beatitudes, and these begin with the word *Blessed*. These Beatitudes outline conditions which bring about peace and happiness. In this great sermon, the Savior admonished all to be peacemakers as he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). *Blessed* means happy, favored, and glorified.

If ever there was a time when we needed peacemakers, it is today; today seems to be a most appropriate time to discuss what we might do to assist in establishing peace, at least within our relationships.

Have you ever wondered how you could be a peacemaker? I would like to mention a few possibilities. Really, our opportunities are unlimited.

Certainly in our homes, as well as elsewhere, we can all be peacemakers by exhibiting love and goodwill, thus offsetting the evil of contention, envy, and jealousy. Where misunderstandings exist between children and parents we can encourage adjustments on the part of both. We can pray together for the spirit of peace.

Homes can be seriously disrupted because of family strife. At times, husbands and wives in an atmosphere of contention destroy their own happiness as well as that of their children.

Divorces seem to be continually increasing. Many of these divorces undoubtedly could have been avoided if peacemakers had been involved during periods of strife.

Young adult peacemakers

An interesting example that I was closely associated with and which I have referred to previously was one in which several young adults became peacemakers in their homes.

A very wise bishop called several young people into his office and said to them: "I would like you to help me in an experiment. I would like to prove the impact and influence of one member on the spirit of the family. For one month, I would like each of you to be the peacemaker in your home. Don't say anything about this to your family, but be thoughtful, kind, and considerate. Be an example. Where there is quarreling or bickering among members of your family, do whatever you can to overcome these faults by creating an atmosphere of love, harmony, and helpfulness.

"When you are irritated—and irritations arise in almost every family—control yourself and help the others to control themselves. I would like to see every home in our ward be 'a bit of heaven on earth.' At the end of the month, I would like you to meet with me again and report."

It was a challenge for these young people, and they met the challenge in a wonderful way.

When they reported back to the bishop, remarks such as these were made. One young fellow said: "I had no idea I would have so much influence in my home. It's really been different this last month. I've been wondering if much of the turmoil and strife we used to have was caused by me and my attitudes."

A young lady said: "I guess we were just the normal family with our selfishness causing little daily conflicts. But as I have worked with my brothers and sisters, a lot of this has been eliminated, and there has been a much sweeter spirit in our home. I believe you really have to work at it to have the spirit of peace in your home."

Another young lady reported: "Yes, there has been a much sweeter

and cooperative and unselfish spirit in our home since I began this experiment, but the biggest difference of all has been in me. I've tried hard to be a good example and a peacemaker, and I feel better about myself than I have ever felt. A wonderful feeling of peace has come over me."

Ways to be peacemakers

Brothers and sisters, how would you like to try the bishop's experiment in your home by being a peacemaker for one month? In the words of the bishop, "Where there is quarreling or bickering among the family members, do whatever you can to overcome these faults by creating an atmosphere of love, harmony, and helpfulness. When you are irritated, control yourself and help the others to control themselves."

I can promise you as you try this experiment and become a peacemaker in your home that the rewards will be most gratifying.

Another way we can be a peacemaker both in our home and our social and business relationships is by avoiding criticism.

Did you ever stop to think that every time you criticize, you are judging?

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, said:

"Judge not, that ye be not judged.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged" (Matthew 7:1-2).

We can also be a peacemaker by practicing and teaching forgiveness. Jesus was asked how many times one should forgive, and he replied that we should forgive without limit. Forgive him "seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22).

In modern revelation, the Lord has said, "Inasmuch as you have forgiven one another your trespasses, even so I, the Lord, forgive you" (D&C 82:1).

An important part of forgiving is forgetting. In some ways, being able to forget is almost as valuable as being able to remember.

Again, as one reviews the various areas of life's activities and appreciates the many human inadequacies, the great value of patience is seen as an important part of being a peacemaker.

Sometimes we are misunderstood, even by those who are closest to us. Under such circumstances, patience will develop within us the capacity to accept criticism if warranted or not. The ability to exercise forbearance under provocation means that we are following the Savior's teachings to do good to those that spitefully use us and to turn the other cheek. (See Matthew 5:39, 44.)

Patience is truly a mighty virtue and can be developed as we become peacemakers and make up our mind to be patient within our own life as well as with others.

I am grateful that the restored gospel of Jesus Christ incorporates the remarkable principle of patience. I am most thankful for the patience my Father in Heaven has evidenced with me in my life.

Be a peacemaker

In dedicating the Hyde Park chapel in London, among other things President McKay said: "If you want peace, yours is the responsibility to obtain it" (*Church News*, 11 Mar. 1961, p. 15).

Brothers and sisters, it is important to appreciate that the gospel has to be lived in order to be fully realized and its power received.

I bear you my testimony that peace can be enjoyed by individuals, families, and society in general, as well as by nations as we live the principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

I rejoice in my knowledge that God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, live and appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and that through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power to act in the name of God has been restored and the Church reestablished on the earth and,

further, that President Spencer W. Kimball is a living prophet. May the Lord's choicest blessings be with him, and may we have the courage and good judgment to follow his counsel and advice.

May each of us in our daily lives assume the role of peacemaker that we may enjoy the peace that surpasseth all understanding, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Thank you, Elder Franklin D. Richards. I should just like to say that Elder Richards has done a tremen-

dous thing; he has rendered a great service in his capacity as Senior President of the First Quorum of the Seventy since that quorum was first organized. I'm sure that the prayers of all of us go with him as he undertakes his great new responsibility as president of the Washington (D.C.) Temple. In that capacity, he will continue to go to stake conferences as a General Authority of the Church and render that kind of yeoman service which he has rendered over a period of many years.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Bishop H. Burke Peterson, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric of the Church.

Bishop H. Burke Peterson

My dear brothers and sisters, this morning I would like to express some feelings that have been going through my mind for some time. I have prayed for the spirit to understand, and to be understood.

An unforgiving and unforgetting spirit

I want to speak of a weakness that has thwarted the spiritual growth of men through the ages. It has affected young and old, rich and poor. Its onward roll is not limited by national boundaries, or race, or creed, or social standing. It affects some who appear to be strong. It affects many who are weak. It poisons the spirit of a person to the point that one is hobbled by its debilitating power. It has the power to drag people to the depths of hell; yet, when released from its hold, they may soar to celestial heights. It has kept many from rising to their full potential. It has been a roadblock to the talented and to the favored. It is one of the most effective tools of Satan. We are speaking of an unforgiving and unforgetting spirit.

There are many today who harbor in the deep recesses of their hearts a canker, a hurt, a feeling of resentment, a dislike, or in some cases even a hate because of unpleasant experiences with past and present associations. Some have been taken advantage of in a business sense. Others have had their feelings hurt by neighbors, or relatives, or friends. A few have been lied to or had a trust of long standing betrayed. Some children, young and now grown, have been offended by harsh or dictatorial parents. Husbands and wives may have deep schisms between them caused by criticism and a resulting resentment. The list of sad experiences goes on and on—yes, it is too long. To those of you who have been nursing the wounds of hurt feelings from the past, even from the little things, I would like to tell an experience which happened some time ago.

The price of revenge

For much of our lives, we lived in central Arizona. Some years ago a group of teenagers from the local high school went on an all-day picnic into