

opened these services by singing "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today."

The choir will now sing "Thy Holy Word," following which Elder Robert K. Dellenbach of the Seventy will offer the invocation.

The choir sang "Thy Holy Word."

President Thomas S. Monson

The two great commandments

During the later Judean ministry of the Lord, "a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

"He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?"

"And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

"And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

"But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?"

"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

"And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

"And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

"And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Elder Robert K. Dellenbach offered the invocation.

President Hinckley

We shall now be pleased to hear from President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"

"And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."¹

Times change, the years roll by, circumstances vary—but the Master's counsel to the lawyer applies to you and to me just as surely as though we heard His voice speaking directly to us this Easter morn.

How to fulfill the first commandment

How might we fulfill today the first part of the divine commandment to love the Lord our God?

The Lord declared: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me"²; "Come, follow me"³; "I have set an example for you"⁴; "I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do."⁵ What, indeed, did He do?

Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, He brought to fulfillment the prophecies of the ages. Shepherds came with haste to adore Him. Wise men from the East came bearing for Him precious gifts; the meridian of time had dawned.

With the birth of the babe in Bethlehem, there emerged a great endowment, a power stronger than weapons, a wealth more lasting than the coins of Caesar. This child was to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the promised Messiah—even Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The holy scriptures inform us that “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”⁶ He was baptized by John.⁷ He “went about doing good.”⁸ At Nain He raised from death to life the widow’s son and presented him to her.⁹ At Bethesda He took compassion on the crippled man who had no hope to get to the pool of promise. He extended His hand; He lifted him up. He healed him from his infirmity.¹⁰

Then came the Garden of Gethsemane with its exceeding anguish. He wrought the great Atonement as He took upon Himself the sins of all. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Then came the cruel cross of Golgotha. In His final hours of mortality, He brought comfort to the malefactor, saying, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”¹¹ He remembered His mother in that eloquent sermon of love personified: “When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”¹² He died—the Great Redeemer died!

How to become like the Savior

Two questions, spoken at an earlier time, roll as thunder to the ears of each of us: “What think ye of Christ?”¹³ and “What shall [we] do . . . with Jesus?”¹⁴ I proffer these three suggestions:

1. *Learn of Him.* “Learn of me,” He pleaded, “for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”¹⁵

2. *Believe in Him.* The writer of the proverb urged: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”¹⁶ His is the only name under heaven whereby we might be saved.

3. *Follow Him.* He brought reality to the word *compassion*. He showed us the way. He marked the path we should follow. Selfless service characterized His life.

By learning of Him, by believing in Him, by following Him, there is the capacity to become like Him. The countenance can change, the heart can be softened, the step can be quickened, the outlook enhanced. Life becomes what it should become. Change is at times imperceptible, but it does take place.

The Savior’s love of neighbor

The Savior’s entire ministry exemplified love of neighbor, the second part of that lesson given to the inquiring lawyer—spoken of as the “royal law.”¹⁷

A blind man healed, the daughter of Jairus raised, and the lepers cleansed—all were neighbors of Jesus. Neighbor also was the woman at the well. He, the perfect man, standing before a confessed sinner, extended a hand. She was the traveler; He was the Good Samaritan. And so the caravan of His kindness continued.

Flight diverted for a mercy mission

What about our time and place? Do neighbors await our love, our kindness, our help?

A few years ago I read a Reuters news service account of an Alaska Airlines nonstop flight from Anchorage to Seattle, carrying 150 passengers, which was diverted to a remote town on a mercy mission to rescue a badly injured boy. Two-year-old Elton Williams III had severed an artery in his arm when he fell

on a piece of glass while playing near his home in Yakutat, 450 miles south of Anchorage. Medics at the scene asked the airline to evacuate the boy. As a result, the Anchorage-to-Seattle flight was diverted to Yakutat.

The medics said the boy was bleeding badly and probably would not live through the flight to Seattle, so the plane flew 200 miles to Juneau, the nearest city with a hospital. The flight then went on to Seattle, with the passengers arriving two hours late, most missing their connections. But none complained. In fact, they dug into their pocketbooks and took up a collection for the boy and his family.

Later, as the flight was about to land in Seattle, the passengers broke into a cheer when the pilot said he had received word by radio that Elton was going to be all right. Surely love of neighbor was in evidence.

Lost opportunities to love neighbors

A man was asked one day, "Who is your next-door neighbor?"

He said, "I don't know his name, but his children run across my lawn and his dog keeps me awake at night!"

Another man, in a different mood, wrote silently one night in his journal: "I thought the house across the street was empty until yesterday. Black crepe on the door made me aware that someone had been living there."

A poet set to verse the sorrow of opportunities forever lost:

Around the corner I have a friend,
In this great city that has no end;
Yet days go by, and weeks rush on,
And before I know it, a year is gone,
And I never see my old friend's face,
For Life is a swift and terrible race.
He knows I like him just as well
As in the days when I rang his bell
And he rang mine.
We were younger then,

And now we are busy, tired men:
Tired with playing a foolish game,
Tired with trying to make a name.
"To-morrow," I say, "I will call on Jim,
Just to show that I'm thinking of him."
But to-morrow comes—and to-morrow
goes,
And the distance between us grows
and grows.

Around the corner!—yet miles away . . .
"Here's a telegram, sir,"
"Jim died to-day."

And that's what we get, and deserve in
the end:
Around the corner, a vanished friend.¹⁸

A small boy and a telephone operator

Long years ago I was touched by a story which illustrated love of neighbor between a small boy named Paul and a telephone operator he had never met. These were the days many will remember with nostalgia but which a new generation will never experience.

Paul related the story:

"When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember that the shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but I used to listen with fascination when Mother would talk to it. Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person. Her name was 'Information, Please,' and there was nothing she did not know. 'Information, Please' could supply anybody's number and the correct time.

"I learned that if I stood on a stool, I could reach the telephone. I called 'Information, Please' for all sorts of things. I asked her for help with my geography, and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my arithmetic, too.

"Then there was the time that Petey, our pet canary, died. I called 'Information, Please' and told her the sad story.

She listened and then said the usual things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was unconsolated. 'Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers, feet up, on the bottom of the cage?' I asked.

"She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, 'Paul, always remember that there are other worlds in which to sing.' Somehow I felt better.

"All this took place in a small town near Seattle. Then we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. 'Information, Please' belonged to that old wooden box back home, and I somehow never thought of trying to call her. The memories of those childhood conversations never really left me; often in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

"Later, when I went west to college, my plane made a stop in Seattle," Paul continued. "I called 'Information, Please,' and when, miraculously, I heard that familiar voice, I said to her, 'I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?'"

"'I wonder,' she said, 'if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children, and I used to look forward to your calls.' I told her how often I had thought of her over the years, and I asked if I could call her again when I came back west.

"'Please do,' she said. 'Just ask for Sally.'

"Only three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered, 'Information,' and I asked for Sally. 'Are you a friend?' the woman asked.

"'Yes, a very old friend,' I replied.

"'Then I'm sorry to have to tell you. Sally has only been working part-time the last few years because she was ill.

She died five weeks ago.' But before I could hang up, she said, 'Wait a minute. Did you say your name was Paul?'"

"'Yes,' I responded.

"'Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down. Here it is—I'll read it. *Tell him I still say there are other worlds in which to sing. He'll know what I mean.*"

"I thanked her and hung up," said Paul. "I did know what Sally meant."

Sally, the telephone operator, and Paul, the boy—the man—were in reality good Samaritans to each other.

There are indeed other worlds in which to sing. Our Lord and Savior brought to each of us the reality of this truth. To the grieving Martha He comforted:

"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."¹⁹

"Follow thou me"

If we truly seek our Lord and Savior, we shall surely find Him. He may come to us as one unknown, without a name, as of old by the lakeside He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words, "Follow thou me,"²⁰ and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands, and to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and they shall learn in their own experience who He is.

On this Easter Sabbath we remember loved ones who have gone from our midst. Cherished memories of happy days, followed by lonely nights, long years, and pensive thoughts, turn our hearts to Him who promised: "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."²¹ "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you . . . ; that where I am, there ye may be also."²²

The Savior of the world

He who taught us to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our strength, and with all our minds, and our neighbors as ourselves, is a Teacher of truth—but He is more than a teacher. He is the Exemplar of the perfect life—but He is more than an exemplar. He is the Great Physician—but He is more than a physician. He is the literal Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, even the risen Lord, who declared: "Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. . . . I am the light and the life of the world."²³ "I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father."²⁴

This Easter morning, as His witness, I testify to you that He lives and that through Him, we too shall live. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. Luke 10:25–37.
2. John 14:21.
3. Luke 18:22.
4. 3 Nephi 18:16.

5. 3 Nephi 18:24.
6. Luke 2:52.
7. See Matthew 3:13–16.
8. Acts 10:38.
9. See Luke 7:11–15.
10. See John 5:2–9.
11. Luke 23:43.
12. John 19:26–27.
13. Matthew 22:42.
14. Matthew 27:22.
15. Matthew 11:29.
16. Proverbs 3:5–6.
17. James 2:8.
18. Charles Hanson Towne, "Around the Corner," in Hazel Felleman, sel., *Poems That Live Forever* (1965), 128.
19. John 11:25–26.
20. John 21:22.
21. John 14:27.
22. John 14:2–3.
23. 3 Nephi 11:10–11.
24. Doctrine and Covenants 110:4.

The choir sang "He Died! the Great Redeemer Died."

President Hinckley

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has just spoken to us, and the choir has sung "He Died! the Great Redeemer Died."

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will now address us.

Elder L. Tom Perry

The sacrament and a green footlocker

During 1995 we experienced many commemorations marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. For those of us who are veterans of this terrible conflict, these commemorations have been times of thoughtful reflection.

It is interesting what memories stay with us year after year, long after the historic event happened. For example, while I was watching a recent TV documentary on the war, suddenly into my mind came an old green footlocker. Let me explain why the green footlocker left such an indelible impression on me.