

Elder William R. Walker

"I'll go where you want me to go"

My beloved brothers and sisters, it is with deep humility and great appreciation that I stand in this holy place. As a little boy growing up in Raymond, Alberta, Canada, I loved it every time we sang, "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord" (*Hymns*, no. 270). Those words, each time we sang them in a sacrament meeting or Sunday School, burned commitment into my heart and soul, that I always wanted to go where the Lord wanted me to go, to say what He wanted me to say—"I'll be what you want me to be," dear Lord. That commitment seems appropriate to restate today.

I'm grateful for the sustaining vote of yesterday, and with you I sustain Presi-

dent Gordon B. Hinckley and his counselors, President Monson and President Faust, and President Packer and all of the Twelve as prophets, seers, and revelators. I bear witness that indeed they are prophets, seers, and revelators.

I love the Lord. I love this Church. I love the wonderful, faithful Saints throughout the world who do all that they can to honor their commitments and to live their religion. I bear witness that God lives and that Jesus Christ, His Son, is our Savior and our Redeemer. I love Him. I want to do all that I can to serve as He would have me serve, and I say these words and bear my witness to the truthfulness of these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder M. Russell Ballard

Brothers and sisters, may I, on behalf of all of us, express appreciation also to the Relief Society presidency and their board who have served us so well and are just recently released.

Finding peace in Jesus Christ

Once again we are approaching the close of another uplifting and inspiring general conference. I always feel so energized and enlightened during these marvelous days of teaching and testimony. I know that most of you feel the same way.

Perhaps what we feel during conference is similar to the feeling experienced by the Savior's earliest disciples as they followed Him from place to place to hear Him teach the good news of His gospel. In many ways those were disheartening days for the children of Israel. Toiling under the domination of the Roman Empire, they yearned for freedom and peace. They

awaited the Messiah; they were sure He would come to deliver them from physical and political oppression. And some responded to the Savior's gospel of happiness and peace, although they did not yet fully appreciate all of its spiritual implications.

On one particular day early in the Lord's mortal ministry, a great multitude followed Him to the Sea of Galilee and pressed around Him as He stood on the shore. "So . . . he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables" (Mark 4:1-2).

Great and wonderful things were taught that day, including the parable of the sower (see Mark 4:3-20). At the end of a full day of teaching and instruction, the Lord suggested to His disciples that they cross to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

While they were sailing that night, "there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

"And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (Mark 4:37-39).

Can you imagine what the Apostles must have been thinking as they watched the very elements—the wind, the rain, and the sea—obey their Master's calm command? Although they had only recently been called to the holy apostleship, they knew Him and they loved Him and believed in Him. They had left their work and their families to follow Him. In a relatively short period of time, they had heard Him teach incredible things, and they had seen Him perform mighty miracles. But this was beyond their comprehension, and the looks on their faces must have shown it.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"

"And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:40-41).

In turbulent and sometimes frightening times, the Savior's promise of infinite and eternal peace resonates with special power to us, just as His ability to calm the crashing waves must have profoundly affected those who were with Him on the Sea of Galilee that stormy night so long ago.

Jesus promises inner peace

Like those who were alive at the time of His mortal ministry, there are some among us who look for physical peace and prosperity as signs of the Savior's wondrous power. We sometimes fail to understand that the everlasting peace Jesus

promises is an inner peace, born in faith, anchored by testimony, nurtured with love, and expressed through continual obedience and repentance. It is a peace of spirit that echoes through the heart and the soul. If one truly knows and experiences this inner peace, there is no fear from worldly disharmony or discord. One knows deep down inside that all is well as far as the things that really matter are concerned.

There is no peace in sin

As President Hinckley instructed the brethren last night, there is no peace in sin. There may be ease, popularity, fame, and even prosperity, but there is no peace. "Wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). One cannot be at peace if one is living a life out of harmony with revealed truth. There is no peace in being mean-spirited or contentious. There is no peace in vulgarity, promiscuity, or permissiveness. There is no peace in addiction to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. There is no peace in being abusive to others in any way, whether it be emotionally, physically, or sexually, for those who are abusive will remain in mental and spiritual turmoil until they come to Christ in all humility and seek forgiveness through complete repentance.

At one time or another I believe everyone yearns for the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7). That peace for our troubled hearts comes to us only as we follow the Light of Christ, which is "given to every man, that he may know good from evil" (Moroni 7:16), as it leads us to repent of sins and seek forgiveness. For all there is a hunger to know "the peaceable things of the kingdom" (D&C 36:2) and to taste "the fruit[s] of righteousness," which are "sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:18). In every home, neighborhood, and community we ought to strive for peace and never be party to stirring up contention or division.

Jesus gives real peace, “not as the world giveth”

Throughout scriptural history, the Lord has promised peace to His followers. The Psalmist wrote, “The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace” (Psalm 29:11). Isaiah referred to the Savior as “The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). And Nephi foresaw the day among his descendants when “the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him” (2 Nephi 26:9).

Just hours before He was to begin that glorious yet awful process of the Atonement, the Lord Jesus Christ made this significant promise to His Apostles: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you” (John 14:27).

Was He promising His beloved associates the kind of peace the world recognizes—safety, security, with the absence of contention or tribulation? Certainly the historical record would suggest otherwise. Those original Apostles knew much of trial and persecution throughout the remainder of their lives, which is probably why the Lord added this insight to His promise: “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in *me* ye might have peace,” He continued. “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33; italics added).

Peace—real peace, whole-souled to the very core of your being—comes only in and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. When that precious truth is discovered and gospel principles are understood and applied, great peace can distill in the hearts and souls of our Heavenly Father’s children. Said the Savior through Joseph Smith, “He who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even

peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

“We will make Saints out of them”

It is sometimes amazing to see the difference this peace can have in the lives of those who accept it. While I was presiding over the Canada Toronto Mission many years ago, our missionaries began teaching a family that was in spiritual darkness. They were poor and uneducated, and their personal appearance reflected a lack of appreciation or concern for normal hygiene and grooming. But they were good, honorable people—among the honest in heart that we always pray for our missionaries to find—and they responded spiritually as they felt for the first time in their lives the peace the gospel offers.

When we learned that they were going to be baptized, Sister Ballard and I attended the baptismal service. I happened to be standing next to the bishop of the ward when the family arrived. In all honesty, I must tell you that they were quite a sight. They looked unkempt, unclean, and somewhat scruffy. Because he had been out of town for a period of time, the bishop had not yet met the newest members of his ward; so this first impression was, to say the least, unimpressive. As they walked away, I thought I could feel his knees begin to buckle.

I put my arm around this good bishop to give him my support—physically as well as spiritually. I felt prompted to say to him, “Bishop, isn’t this wonderful? We will make good Latter-day Saints out of them!”

He looked at me, and he smiled. I just couldn’t tell if he was smiling because he agreed with me, or if he thought that I might be just another overenthusiastic missionary.

The baptismal service proceeded, and the family was baptized. The next day we decided to attend that ward to make sure the family was well received when they

came to their meetings as new members of the Church.

As the family came into the chapel for sacrament meeting, I was sitting on the stand next to the bishop. The father was wearing a clean white shirt. It was not large enough for him to fasten the top button at the neck, and he was wearing a tie that I could remember seeing on one of my elders. But his face radiated with happiness and peace. The mother and daughters looked like they had been transformed from the previous day. Their dresses were not fancy, but they were clean and lovely. They also had that special gospel glow. The little boys wore white shirts that were several sizes too large for them, even with the sleeves rolled up. And they were wearing ties that almost extended down to their knees. It was obvious that the missionaries had put their own white shirts and ties on these little boys so they could come to sacrament meeting appropriately dressed.

They sat with their missionaries, and the light of the gospel literally shone from them. Alma describes this as “[receiving God’s] image in your countenances” (Alma 5:14). I leaned over to the bishop again and said, “See, Bishop? We will make Saints out of them!”

Of course that overnight physical transformation was superficial when compared to the overwhelming, more significant spiritual transformation that took place in that family as the gospel entered their hearts and lives. Through the instruction of the missionaries and the subsequent fellowshiping of their good bishop and the ward members, this entire family emerged from spiritual darkness into gospel light and truth. In that light the family was warmed, refreshed, and revitalized by the peace that comes from knowing the Lord Jesus Christ lives. The light of the gospel truths restored to earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith began to show this family the way to the temple, where one year later they received their eternal blessings.

Again quoting the prophecies of Isaiah: “And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children” (Isaiah 54:13).

Be instruments of the Lord’s peace

Once we have tasted the sweet fruit of God’s peace, we are naturally inclined to share it with others. Francis of Assisi was known as the “lover of creation” who lived most of his life ministering to the poor and the needy who were around him—including the animals. The peace he found in his service energized him and made him yearn to embrace others with it. He wrote:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace;
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 Where there is injury, pardon;
 Where there is doubt, faith;
 Where there is despair, hope;
 Where there is darkness, light;
 And where there is sadness, joy.
 O Divine Master, grant that I may not
 so much seek
 To be consoled as to console;
 To be understood as to understand;
 To be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive;
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 And it is in dying that we are born to
 eternal life.

On more than one occasion the Lord urged His followers to be “peacemakers,” promising that such would “be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9). That concept is woven throughout the scriptures, creating a patchwork of peace through parable and proclamation:

- “Agree with thine adversary” (Matthew 5:25).
- “Love your enemies” (Matthew 5:44).
- “Judge not” (Matthew 7:1).
- “Love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39).
- “Condemn not” (Luke 6:37).

- “Forgive” (Luke 6:37).
- “Love one another” (John 13:34).

Those are but a few of the scriptural instructions clearly indicating that God’s peace is not to be hoarded. Rather, it is to be shared liberally with our families, our friends, and our communities. It is to be shared with the Church as well as those who are not members of our Church. While those around us may not choose to taste the sweetness and peace of the fullness of the restored gospel for themselves, surely they will be blessed by seeing it in our lives and feeling the peace of the gospel in our presence. The message of peace will grow and expand through our example.

“Live in peace,” said the Apostle Paul, “and the God of love and peace shall be with you” (2 Corinthians 13:11).

I am grateful that I can witness to you that Jesus is the Christ, and He is the Son of God. By following Him in faith and trust, all may find the sweet inner peace the gospel offers to us as it has been taught to us so beautifully during this conference. To this I humbly testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

As we conclude this conference, we express appreciation to the Tabernacle Choir, the combined choir from the Logan and Ogden institutes, and the men’s choir from BYU—Idaho, and their conductors

and organists, for the beautiful and inspiring music.

We thank our city officials for the cooperation given this conference; the doctors, the Church Health Unit nurses, and the ambulance services which have been on hand to render assistance; the ushers and interpreters; and those who are responsible for the beautiful flowers on Temple Square and in the Conference Center.

We also express appreciation to local and national media representatives for their coverage of the conference and to the owners and the operators of the many radio and television stations, cable systems, and Internet service providers who have given time and made facilities available to carry sessions of this conference in many countries of the world.

As you leave the conference this afternoon, we ask you to obey the traffic rules, to use caution, and to be courteous in driving.

President Gordon B. Hinckley, our beloved prophet, will be our concluding speaker. I testify to you, as one who knows, that he is God’s prophet here upon the earth at this time. Following President Hinckley’s remarks, the choir will sing “Abide with Me; ’Tis Eventide.” The benediction will then be offered by Elder Bruce D. Porter of the Seventy, and this conference will be adjourned for six months.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

My beloved brethren and sisters, I too would like to express deep appreciation for the tremendous service of Sister Smoot, Sister Jensen, Sister Dew, and their board, who have served so very faithfully and well in this great and tremendous organization for women. It is a marvelous society, 4,900,000 strong. There is nothing like it, I think, in all the world, and it touches for such tremendous good the

lives of women everywhere across the earth. Thank you, dear sisters, for what you’ve done. Welcome to you, Sister Parkin and your counselors, and the board which you will select.

“Abide with me”

We now conclude this great conference. We have enjoyed a wonderful feast