

"Why Call Me Lord, Lord, and Do Not the Things Which I Say?"

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This past week we have been celebrating the Easter week. Happy Easter to all of you! We read in the scripture:

"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

"His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

"And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

"And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." (Matt. 28:1-7.)

"The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable." (Ralph Sockman.) The name Jesus Christ and what it represents has been plowed deep into the history of the world, never to be uprooted. Christ was born on the sixth of April. Being one of the sons of God and His Only Begotten, his birth is of supreme importance.

The ministry of Christ—nothing in all the world approaches these three pivotal years of his ministry as did those three years.

The crucifixion came. He needed to die, that he might open the graves of all men as his own tomb was opened. Without the deep darkness of the crucifixion hour, there could have been no spring of coming from the grave. "For in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.) That is why we rejoice today. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55.)

The 11 apostles followed Christ to the top of the Mount of Olives, and this is recorded in our scriptures, when the two angels who were there said:

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:12.)

The purpose of this conference is that we may refresh our faith, strengthen our testimonies, and learn the ways of the Lord from his duly appointed and authorized servants. May we take this opportunity, then, to remind each other of our covenants and promises and commitments.

All members have been baptized by immersion in water and have received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands by properly authorized men who hold the holy priesthood. We all have been received by baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ when we have humbled ourselves before God, have desired to be baptized, have come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and when we have witnessed before the Church that we are truly repentant of our sins and are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end and thus manifest by our works that we have received the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of our sins.

With some of the Brethren we have just returned recently from the area conferences in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In that southern world of Zion we reminded them that Zion was all of North and South America, like the wide, spreading wings of a great eagle, the one being North and the other South America.

The Church there is progressing and growing. The people are happy and inspired; the youth are laughing and dancing as they grow to leadership.

The "gathering of Israel" is effected when the people of the faraway countries accept the gospel and remain in their native lands. The gathering of Israel for Mexicans is in Mexico; in Scandinavia, for those of the northern countries; the gathering place for the Germans is in Germany; and the Polynesians, in the islands; for the Brazilians, in Brazil; for the Argentines, in Argentina. We express our appreciation to the Lord for his goodness as we direct the activities of three and a half million people, ever growing more populous, and more independent, and even more faithful.

Nearly 19,000 missionaries preach the gospel today. "The field is white already to harvest" (D&C 4:4), and the missionaries and the members are bringing many to a knowledge of the gospel.

We are sending missionaries to the four corners of the earth and to the ends of the world and look forward to the day when we shall take the exalting message to all places in the North, the South, the East, and the West, and the islands of the sea. Truly, this is now a world church with nearly 700 functioning stakes and about 7,500 wards and branches, and about 150 missions. We are approaching the covering of the earth with the gospel as the depths are covered with the mighty oceans.

The Church is healthy. The people generally are faithful. They are happy. Recently a prominent eastern visitor asked me the question "Why are you, the Mormon people, such happy folks?" And my answer was, "It is because we have everything—the gospel of Jesus Christ, the light, the priesthood, the power, the promises, the covenants, the temples, our families, the truth."

We have turned the Church hospitals over to an independent source for operation. We have dedicated a magnificent temple structure in Washington, D.C., and have announced another temple to be built in Sao Paulo, in South America.

In an earlier conference we called attention to the fact that the Lord had created for us this beautiful world and gave command to our father Adam to till the ground and to dress the land and to make it habitable. That command continues to us.

We recommend to all people that there be no undue pollution, that the land be taken care of and kept clean to be productive and to be beautiful, He gave to us the herbs and the good things which come of the earth for food and raiment and houses and barns and orchards and gardens and vineyards, each in the season thereof, and all of this is given for the benefit and use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart; for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul. And it pleased God that he had given all these things unto man; for unto this end were they made to be used, with judgment. (See D&C 59:16–20.)

We are concerned when we see numerous front and side and back yards that have gone to weeds, where ditch banks are cluttered and trash and refuse accumulate. It grieves us when we see broken fences, falling barns, leaning and unpainted sheds, hanging gates, and unpainted property. And we ask our people again to take stock of their own dwellings and properties.

There is a story that President Brigham Young, having urged the people of certain communities to properly dress and clean their premises, refused to go back to them to preach to them, saying something like this: "You didn't listen to me when I urged you to fix up your premises. The same doors are off their hinges; the same barns are still unpainted; the same fences are partly fallen."

The following excerpt comes from a much-read magazine:

"Almost every backyard has what every person needs: a way to help cut inflation and ease the world food crisis in the process.

"It's called 'land.' And there doesn't have to be much of it to help a lot.

"It can be the play area that doesn't get played on anymore, a sunny plot behind the garage, a 10-foot strip that runs across the back of the lot, or the adjoining lot that was bought to grow grass and play catch on.

"And all you need to make this space lower your food costs is to raise your own vegetables on it.

"It's been calculated that a carefully managed garden just 15 x 20 feet in size can yield almost \$300 worth of fresh food in six months. So the savings can be substantial."

We are pleased that many people are planting gardens and fruit trees and are buying canning jars and lids. City officials here and many other individuals are planting patches of soil almost equal to the days of the "victory gardens" in World War II. We congratulate those families who are listening and doing.

We make a conscientious effort to look out for our own members, and we teach them to practice economy, to store a year's supply of basic commodities.

We teach our people to live the laws of health. It is paying important dividends in longer and more healthy lives.

A study of researchers at a university center reveals the fact that "there is a significantly lower percentage of cancer of the lung and esophagus among the 'Mormon Church' members." One prominent doctor said they are healthier and wiser for not smoking and drinking. He indicated that cancer of the esophagus is strongly related to alcohol. He said further, "Utahns as a whole have 25 percent fewer deaths from heart attacks than do Americans at large, and this can be associated with less smoking."

We are appalled at the reported dishonesty in many communities in our land; that the loss through shoplifting and allied dishonest tricks runs into billions of dollars in this country alone.

The Lord told Adam's posterity and carved it into the stone plates, "Thou shalt not steal." (Ex. 20:15.) All parents should train their children against this deadly thing which can destroy their characters. Honesty is socially and culturally right. Liars and cheaters are both dishonest and alien to our culture. Dishonesty of all kinds is most reprehensible. "Thou shalt not steal."

We call upon all the three and a half million members of this church to be honest, full of integrity, pay for what they get and take only that which they have properly paid for. We must teach our children honor and integrity.

From the beginning we have been advised against gambling of every sort. The deterioration and damage comes to the person, whether he wins or loses, to get something for nothing, something without effort, something without paying the full price.

Recently the *U. S. News and World Report* ran a list of principal forms of crime in America with the cost per year of each. Losses in gambling led all the rest.

Gambling losses were five times the narcotics bill; more than 20 times the cost of hijacking; four times the losses in embezzlements, fraud, and forgery combined; ten times greater than robbery, burglary, theft, and shoplifting; 25 times greater than vandalism and arson, and more than twice the cost of maintaining all federal, state, and local police, plus the expense of operating our penal system and the courts which handle criminals.

And what was the cost of gambling?

Thirty billion dollars per year.

And yet, some states are introducing lotteries as a means of increasing their income. Some clubs—even some religious groups—sponsor gambling games.

Think what could be done if this money were diverted into worthwhile lines! What would \$30 billion a year do to help the starving people.

We are terribly distressed to read in the press that smoking among women and teenagers is increasing and that women are now beginning to get lung cancer in increasing numbers. About 80 percent of all lung cancers occur in cigarette smokers, but this is only the beginning of the problem. Cigarette smoking is similarly linked to emphysema, bronchial diseases, and heart diseases. They are

costly diseases that cause much suffering and carry people away from life prematurely.

The Lord gave in a sacred revelation in 1833 what we have more recently learned through research: "Hot drinks are not for the body." This is tea and coffee. "Tobacco is not for the body ... and is not good for man. ... Wine or strong drink ... is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father." (See D&C 89:5–9.)

The Lord knew when these things were discovered that constant smoking could lead to cancer; that constant drinking could lead to many accidents and diseases.

It is now a command to all his members, and as we see some members using these prohibited things, we wonder how they reconcile such activities with the statement of the Lord Jesus Christ when he said: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) We sincerely hope the members of the Church will give heed.

Two researchers of the University of Utah have given us proof: This Church has a low death-rate tradition. The state of Utah, with about 72 percent of its population claimed by the Church in 1971, had the lowest death rate of any state in the continental United States. There were states with nearly twice this state's death rate.

The survey shows that deaths due to heart, cancer, and liver-related diseases, three of the ten leading causes of death in America related to smoking and drinking, are less prevalent in Utah than in the United States generally. Thus, the Church death rate is related to the Word of Wisdom.

And so, we ask those who ignore this law: Why? Why? The Lord said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21–23.)

This is serious business—living the commandments of the Lord, and sometimes taking it upon ourselves to ignore them.

Back in the earliest days after the Creation, the Lord said to Enoch: "Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency." (Moses 7:32.) We have no intent to take away from our friends, and the other people of the world, their agency in the use of these prohibited things. But we believe that the Lord, when he gave the Word of Wisdom, was speaking to all the people in the world.

We fear that never in the history of the world have there ever been so many more people bowing to the god of lust than there were bowing to golden calves and the images of wood and stone and metal. This idolatry, so closely associated with the destruction of mind and body, could inundate the world. We note the great

increase in divorces. We disavow them. We sorrow with them, realizing that if there are justifiable ones, the justifiable ones are few. Generally, divorce is spelled *SELFISHNESS* on the part of one party, generally both. It is ugly and generally most destructive for the people concerned, in their loss, their sorrow, their loneliness and frustration, particularly with the many children who are greatly deprived. It is easy to rationalize and justify the divorce. Our study reveals the fact that all too often it is because of their immoralities and their idolatrous worship of the god of lust.

It is hard indeed to justify in one small city not far from us 272 divorces in the same time that 341 marriage licenses were given.

When men and women are selfless and devoted to their companions, they will have returned more nearly to the image of marriage described by the Lord when he said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." (Moses 3:24.)

When men are true to their covenants made with their wives and are loyal and selfless, divorces will take a downward trend. Paul gave the injunctions, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. ... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh." (Eph. 5:25, 28–29.)

And when women forget their pettiness and selfishness and submit themselves to their own righteous husbands as unto the Lord, and when they are subject to their husbands as the Church is expected to be subject unto Christ, then will the divorce rate reduce, and families will grow, and children will be happy, laughing children. God created male and female with special talents, powers, responsibilities, and with the ability to perform their special tasks.

When men come home to their families and women devote themselves to their children, the concept will return, that to be a mother is her greatest vocation in life. She is a partner with God. No being has a position of such power and influence. She holds in her hands the destiny of nations, for to her comes the responsibility and opportunity of molding the nation's citizens.

In a California stake I heard a mother give this sermon: "I am grateful that I am a woman. I am grateful that I am a wife. I am grateful that I am a mother. I am grateful that I am a Latter-day Saint." This I thought was a powerful sermon. Motherhood is the greatest vocation.

Much is being said in the press and in the pulpit concerning abortion. This Church of Jesus Christ opposes abortion and counsels all members *not* to submit to nor participate in any abortion, in any way, for convenience or to hide sins.

Abortion must be considered one of the most revolting and sinful practices in this day, when we are witnessing a frightening evidence of permissiveness leading to sexual immorality. We take the solemn view that any tampering with the fountains of life is serious, morally, mentally, psychologically, physically. To interfere with any of the processes in the procreation of offspring is to violate one of the most sacred of God's commandments—to "multiply, and replenish the earth." (Gen. 1:28.)

Members of the Church guilty of being parties to the sin of abortion must be subjected to the disciplinary action of the councils of the Church, as circumstances warrant. We remember the reiteration of the Ten Commandments given by the Lord in our own time, when he said, "Thou shalt not steal; neither commit adultery, nor kill, nor do anything like unto it." (D&C 59:6.) We see some similarities.

We abhor pornography that seems to be flooding the land. Legislation makes an effort to curb it, but the best way to stop it is to have men and women, with their families, build barriers against it. We ask you, "Do you good people of your community want this ugly vice to corrupt your families and your neighbors?"

Moses came down from the quaking, smoking Mount Sinai and brought to the wandering children of Israel the Ten Commandments, fundamental rules for the conduct of life. These commandments were, however, not new. They had been known to Adam and his posterity, who had been commanded to live them from the beginning and were merely reiterated by the Lord to Moses. And the commandments even antedated earth life and were part of the test for mortals established in the council of heaven.

The first of the Ten Commandments requires that men worship the Lord; the fourth designates a sabbath day especially for worship: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. ... Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." (Ex. 20:3, 8–10.)

The failure to keep the Sabbath holy is evidence of man's failure to meet the individual test set for each of us before the creation of the world, "to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." (Abr. 3:25.)

We urge our people to do all their shopping on the weekday. Again we say, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.)

When the Lord said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," we believe he meant exactly that.

We are appalled at the conscious effort of many of the people in this world to take it upon themselves, presumptive, to change the properly established patterns of social behavior established by the Lord, especially with regard to marriage, sex life, family life. We must say: "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (See Isa. 29:14.)

Brethren and sisters, God bless you as you move forward to meet all your commitments and live the commandments. We bless you in your efforts to become like our Lord that you will become more like him. May God richly bless you in your homes, your families, and your personal lives, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.