

Address of Welcome to the third Triennial Delegate Assembly
by E.L. Christensen, Vice Pres. on July 31, 1970

OUR CHALLENGE

We know from our study of the origin and nature of human personality that we are the material and evolutionary children of a God of love. We also know that this God of universal love is a God of infinite wisdom. In accordance with his love and wisdom, God has confronted us with the material fact of human imperfection at the same time placing within the human mind and heart a spark of divine perfection -- a spirit guide or monitor that individualizes for each of us the living love of the everlasting God. This fact of creature imperfection and this inner presence of the gift of God present man's personality with the great challenge; the Heavenly Father's supreme mandate: "Be you perfect, even as I am perfect."

There is a great moral issue placed in this life before the free-will of the personality of man. This is the issue of matter versus spirit -- the things of this world versus the spiritual values of this world and the worlds beyond. If the goal of man is solely material, temporal, and self-seeking, then has that man, in effect, prostituted his God-given freedom of choice to the narrow service of self. In the last analysis, such a self-serving human being is very close to being a self worshipper. For as Jesus truly said, "Where your treasure is, there will the heart be also."

If a man's treasure is spiritual, even the doing of the will of God, then has such an enlightened person embarked on the long, long trail of the pursuit of the ultimate spiritual value -- a pursuit that can end only when the personality of the perfection-hungry creature stands face to face with the God of Perfection at the center of all things.

As the supreme moral issue is drawn in this life, it is as between matter and spirit, between the will of God and the will of man.

Let us first take cognizance of the fact that man is indwelt by a bestowed spirit nucleus (the Thought Adjuster). Second, that the mind of man is an intellect system designed to work around this spirit nucleus. Third, that the mind of man is designed to function in, and to exercise dominance over, the physical body and, to a certain extent, the material environment. Its real purpose is to provide the mechanism for making decisions in conformance with the will of the personality either to follow or not to follow the Adjuster's loving leadings, the path of eternal life. Real trouble, or lasting disappointment -- in other words, spiritual death -- can come only if self-assertion should presume fully to displace the governing power of the central spirit nucleus, thereby disrupting the cosmic scheme of personality identity.

It is the personality that must choose between the service of self and the selfless service of God. This desire to serve the Father in heaven -- to do his will on earth -- is the only possible way in which we may obey that inspiring invitation of our Master that has rung in Christian ears through nineteen centuries of time: "Follow me."

As we follow this Master of man in our daily lives on earth, our hearts bow with Him in worship and adoration of "our Father who is in heaven." We are as one with Jesus of Nazareth as we enshrine the name Father, Heavenly Father, in our hearts. And as we work in our everyday tasks, we work not only for ourselves but also, with Jesus, for God that his kingdom may come on earth with all of the glorious splendor wherewith it is manifested in heaven.

In our seeking for a livelihood, in our quest for the bread of this world, we should be ever mindful also to feed our souls with the bread of life. And in our contacts with our fellowmen, in our dealings with our brothers in the flesh, we will show forth mercy and loving kindness even as we expectantly hope to receive these good things from the Heavenly Father himself. And always, as we work and serve, as we labor with material things and seek for spiritual values, will we be mindful that it is God's kingdom, God's power, and God's glory that we seek. And these things which we seek shall abide, even forevermore.

"The keys of the kingdom of heaven are: sincerity, more sincerity, and more sincerity. All men have these keys. Men use them to advance in spirit status by decisions, by more decisions, and by more decisions. The highest moral choice is the choice of the highest possible value, and always, in any sphere, this is to choose to do the will of God. If man thus chooses, he is great, though he be the humblest citizen of Jerusem or even the least of mortals of Urantia." (p. 435, par. 8)

The exercise of moral courage, the making of moral decisions, can lead only to the development of moral strength. Those who gain entrance into the kingdom must be honest of heart, and those who desire to progress in the kingdom must grow in moral strength. If such strength turns inward to man's spirit nucleus, to the divine Adjuster, then all is gained. Then may the moral transcend the ethical in reaching for the spiritual.

"When man makes a reflective moral choice, he experiences a divine invasion of his soul." (p. 2095, par. 4)

You are not conscious of the mighty and loving work being wrought within all of you who permit these efforts by your consecrated decisions. You of sincere heart should not be dismayed over apparent failures or by perplexing confusions -

by the difficulties between the mortal and immortal natures. Our Father in heaven knows all of your struggles and your longings. He loves you with an inexhaustible love. Open your hearts and let his affection speak to your mortal self and feed the immortal soul.

The Universal Father has equipped us royally, he has endowed us with all the attributes and powers necessary to respond to his challenge. He has invested us with the priceless power of choice that accompanies his gift of personality. He has entrusted to our custody a small portion, an Adjuster fragment, of his unfathomable nature to serve as our spirit nucleus and as our pilot to his presence on Paradise. Having thus endowed us he challenges us greatly, and then waits patiently to see what we will do with these priceless gifts.

From each of us he asks for all that we have. But this "all" is always in proportion to our capacity to give. To one he says, "Be a good shepherd; feed my sheep." To another he may say, "Learn to love men as I have loved you." To some he asks, "Do you love me?" Of others he queries, "Do you trust me?" Of yet another he may ask, "Do you believe in me?" (p. 2047, par. 2) Always is the challenge personalized and individualized; not a challenge to all men but a challenge to each man. And it is always made in terms of the capabilities of the particular individual whom God is personally challenging. Always does he "take note of the man, in what manner he was born." (p. 314, par. 2)

God has enriched us beyond compare. He is challenging us to invest our "talents" with profit to ourselves and to his creation. But above all, he is challenging us with love, with an infinite love that is all but blinding in the intensity of its manifestation. And the question that confronts us and every

other being in this universe age is a very simple one: What are we doing with this love, this love that we can feel even without understanding it? What are we doing about it, here and now? THE ACT IS OURS!

And may you all become valiant soldiers of the circles -- wholeheartedly enlisted in the solid ranks of those mortals who shall go forth in this coming battle for truth against error under the unfaltering leadership of the mighty seraphim of progress.

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E.L.C.