

# *“Rejoice in Christ Jesus, and Have No Confidence in the Flesh”*

F. ENZIO BUSCHE

**M**y dear brothers and sisters, I am coming to you today in a very contrite, humble spirit as I am feeling I should address you with some matters of a more delicate nature but which, in my estimation, are of basic importance. I hope that I will be capable of expressing my feelings without being misunderstood—knowing that this can easily happen as I am not expressing myself in my native language.

## **Something of More Importance**

Some time ago, when I was living in the mission field, the missionaries invited me to come see a couple they had been teaching for some time. The missionaries reported to me what a choice couple they were. However, they were very much afraid to make the change and the commitment of baptism. As we entered the home of this wonderful family and found ourselves in their living room, I recognized their fear and anxiety over this visit. I understood that they had been taught the gospel, that they had received all of the discussions, and that they already had a testimony that the gospel is true. I felt prompted to ask them, “What do you think the Lord expects you to do when you enter into the bond of the covenant of baptism for the forgiveness of sins?”

I remember that the woman looked at him and the man looked at her with the sweetness of two wonderful persons in their first years of marriage, and finally he said, “I think we will have to pay our tithing.” I remember that I answered, “Yes, that is true, but there is something of more importance. What do you think the Lord will expect you to do when you enter into this covenant?”

After some inquiring glances from her to him and from him to her, he said quite hesitantly, “We must give up our drinking, our coffee, and our smoking.” Again I told him, “Yes, that is true, but there is something of more importance.”

After we had discussed all the necessary requirements for baptism and I was still insisting that there was something of more importance, they became even more uneasy about what else there still was to do. I felt inspired to say to them, “I can see that you have learned to love the Lord and understand the basic

---

*F. Enzo Busche was a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this devotional address was given at Brigham Young University on 28 May 1985.*

principles of the covenant which you are about to make with him. Now the Lord wants you to take the Spirit, which will be given to you as his gift after baptism, and make it the greatest objective of your life—to let this Spirit be unfolded within you to its fullness of power. Thus, the Lord wants you both to love one another with an even deeper, more sensitive, caring love—a love of a new dimension that is different from the way the world knows—even to such a dimension that you will be overwhelmed by your insight, your patience, your caring, and sensitivity so that you will both be filled with a new dimension of joy and peace.”

The expressions on their faces changed from fear, anxiety, and despair to relaxed smiles of rejoicing. He reached for her hand, looked dearly into her eyes, pressed her hand to his lips, and said with conviction, “I think we are ready.”

My dear brothers and sisters, since the days of the earthly mission of our Lord and Master, Christians have known about the great commandments and the law that we must love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and love our neighbor as ourselves—but mankind is still awaiting its fulfillment! With the restoration of the gospel and the true Church, the Lord expects that the fulfillment of this commandment become the center of our lives. As we receive an understanding that it is not only the greatest commandment but that we need to be filled with this love to fulfill the many opportunities and challenges that life brings to us, and as we are filled with this love, we will stand without fear until the last day.

To love one another may not be everything, but everything will be nothing without this love. The love we are talking about is different from that which the world knows. So many of the people of the world will say, “I love you,” but what they really mean is, “I want you, I lust after you.” The love the Lord is speaking about is different. It is the love that always

places the other person—the object of love—higher than one’s self. As the Lord says in John 15:12–13:

*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

As Nephi was inquiring to understand the dream of his father Lehi and was speaking with an angel as to the meaning of the tree of life which his father had beheld, he said: “It is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things” (1 Nephi 11:22).

The “natural man,” or the natural side of us, will never comprehend this, will never be able to understand it, because this love is a gift from above. It is a gift from our Heavenly Father—a gift of the Spirit that needs to be acquired and achieved on the condition of chastity, purity of thought, desire, and obedience to the covenants we have made with God. As we learn to fulfill these prerequisites, this love will be our constant companion and will be the only power to change the realities of this cruel world in preparation for the Second Coming of the Lord.

### **A Wonderful Design from Heaven**

An essential part of the restoration of the gospel was to give an understanding that there is a purpose in why we were created separate, male and female—with each part to fulfill a certain purpose, a certain role that we have to see, to develop, and to stay within. Created as we are, we are only half. And born as we are as individuals, we will always have the feeling of being only half—of having lost something, but of needing to seek and to work and to serve in order to be worthy to become whole again.

Such feelings will be found within a virtuous young lady as she experiences the years of

puberty with accompanying yearnings and desires. When a young woman is blessed with wise and worthy parents, she will be taught by them that she is unique, a choice daughter of our Heavenly Father, a woman who has been designed and prepared with the capability of giving life. This is the most important assignment and calling a woman can ever have, not only to give life but to preserve it, to train it, to comfort it, to nurture and strengthen it—all this that her children might stand in virtue, might stand in self-esteem, might stand in unity with divine sources. She will want these children to be filled with joy, satisfaction, fulfillment, and able to overcome all fear. She will want them to trust and know and be nurtured by the source of life itself—even the divine source—prepared for the creation of peace, unity, and fulfillment. She will be told by her wise parents that she is designed to be the crown of manhood (Proverbs 12:4).

Wise and worthy parents will teach their sons that *their* role is to respect, provide for, protect, care for, and give shelter and security to womanhood.

What a wonderful, masterful design! As we are separated in our own ways, virtues, talents, and gifts, we are harboring a longing for one another with tender feelings of admiration for someone who is mysteriously different, for someone who is mysteriously wonderful. What a wonderful, masterful design, because the Lord has given us in the times of our tender youth, as we remain clean in the virtues of chastity, a powerful demonstration of the sweetness of feelings of caring, of self-denying love.

Perhaps you will recognize yourself and recall your memories of youth as I share with you, with the permission of my wife, an experience I had when I was a young man in school and there was this young lady who caused a strange feeling within me. I cannot recall exactly how she looked or what kind of character she really had, but there she was. Just being in the same room with her made me so

nervous and so helpless that I could hardly speak and hardly breathe for fear of making a fool of myself. My feelings for her were so tender that I could hardly avoid thinking of her. It seemed that in everything that I was doing, she was in my thoughts. What could I do to please her? Or even to save her life in giving my blood? What a wonderful way from our Heavenly Father—to be allowed to experience in the age of our tender youth the purity and strength of what divine love is made of!

After a year of experiencing these feelings and not being able to endure her presence and not even being able to speak to her out of nervousness, I was finally courageous enough at Christmastime to write her a very brief letter. As these were times of starvation in Germany and goodies were hard to come by, I saved the special treats I received for Christmas, overcoming my own craving for them in order to keep them as a present or a gift to her if she would answer my letter. But she never did! After three weeks of waiting in vain, I found myself back with my feet on the ground, and I devoured all the goodies in one quick action and brushed off the feelings for her that I had. It is interesting to note that as I found myself with my feet on the ground without this tender feeling, the desire and willingness to sacrifice or to go the extra mile for her sake also vanished. I often think that it was good that she did not write back so the way could be preserved for me to find my faithful, wonderful companion who is with me today.

### **The Church as a Vital Instrument Providing the Light of Christ**

When a young person's maturity is reached, there is the likelihood of being confronted with the prospect of marriage. As we are converted to the gospel and endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, what are the thoughts that will go through our minds in preparation for this—the most frightening, awesome, and beautiful experience of our mortal life? As both male

and female are children of a loving Heavenly Father, both have the same destiny of being embodied in the matter of the flesh, which is “the natural man.” As both embrace the gospel and keep the commandments and communicate with Heavenly Father, looking for his constant guidance and having him and his glory as their first thought, he will give them the strength to not follow the foolishness of “the natural man”—the carnal mind that is in us all. The Lord will give each of us the power to see and overcome temptations, false goals, and ambitions.

At this time we gain an understanding of the purpose of not only the restoration of the gospel with its principles and ordinances, but also the establishment of an institution—a Church where we can learn from one another through participation in various organizations, programs, and activities; where our learning grows as we serve and as we give and involve our lives. Through the teachings we receive in the Church, we will grow in our understanding. We will learn how the plan of salvation must have an impact upon our daily actions, how we can distinguish between what is true and false, the good and the bad, righteousness and selfishness, modesty and vanity.

To condense it into simplified terms, one might say that the Church in its organizations can be considered as the vital instrument to help the individual—not only to help him stay true to his covenants but, most of all, to provide an opportunity for him to learn to love, that his life will be filled with the Light of Christ, and that this Light will become the generating power for all the actions of his life.

Thus the Church is fulfilling the dream, the vision, and the hope of righteous people in the history of mankind so beautifully expressed by Meister Johannes Eckehart, a German monk who lived in the early fourteenth century:

*That is the purpose of our creation—that we might, through our creative, reason-directed*

*endeavors in our mortality, learn to approach God and to become more and more like him.* [K. O. Schmidt, *Meister Eckeharts Weg zum kosmischen Bewusstsein*, 1969 ed. (Muenchen, Germany: Drei Eichen Verlag), p. 112]

We seem to have a tendency to see in the Church the things that we have to do—our duties and our responsibilities—and sometimes we miss seeing how the Lord expects that our first and foremost responsibility is to be filled with his light and his power, that we might receive strength and the capability to overcome “the natural man” within us. Then it will be a privilege, an opportunity, to do all our necessary work and assignments—giving of our time and talents without feeling burdened but with rejoicing, giving unconditional love in our relationships with our fellow men. So it was with the young couple who were so afraid of the many things expected of them that they felt baptism to be a threat. But, as we learn to strive to achieve the constant guidance of the Spirit as our first priority, everything becomes easy!

### **Being Filled with the Light of Christ Is the Key**

A young woman who goes through the experience of this learning, encouraged by parents and the Church, will then understand, through the light of the Spirit of the Lord, that the beauty of *personality* and *character* is the beauty to be sought after. She will question the wisdom of the women of the world as they invest time and money to gild their faces with the colors of vanity and to dress their bodies with the fashion of lust. She will be proud to be a woman and never feel inferior or try to disguise her being a woman by competing with masculinity. She will love to be feminine and to develop her personality. As she is able to develop the radiating light of the spirit within herself, she will know that she need not be too concerned about her outward appearance, for she will always be admirable and will blossom

and glow. She will understand the meaning of the warnings that the prophets have given the daughters of Zion:

*And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. [Isaiah 3:24]*

A young man, going through the same experience of this learning to strive first to be filled with the Spirit, encouraged by parents and the Church, will then understand what a privilege it is to remain chaste, preserved, and clean so that he is worthy when the time comes to be called to testify to the world of the Restoration—in so doing and in so giving, he receives. He receives maturity, insight, understanding, and depth and perfection of preparation—the preparation for life and for marriage. A young man, being filled with the light and power of Christ, will find it easy to obey all the covenants he makes with the Lord, and he will have the strength, the comfort, insight, and direction not to pursue the vain things of this world or to indulge in the falsely understood manhood of unrighteous dominion. He will see reason to constantly find new motivation to admire the true character of womanhood and to stand in awe and admiration of its uniqueness. He will be womanhood's protector, its provider, its benefactor, a learner, and will be blessed with the capability to understand and to forgive.

As they are united in marriage, *her* well-being will be the center of his concerns, as well as the world of *her* development and *her* fulfillment; in so doing it will be *her* natural inclination to take a deep interest and concern in the development of *his* individual life. She will enjoy creating an atmosphere of home and sacrificing her time to care about him. She will not have the feeling of having lost something, because his gain will also be her gain. Both can

then become *one* in sharing, in communication, in admiring, and achieving. Thus, they will be interwoven together in times of joy, in times of pain, in times of achievement, and in times of failure. They will both know that marriage does not mean there will always be contentment and fulfillment but that it may sometimes be a thorn-strewn road of learning, growing, forgiving, understanding, of maintaining persistence, and, finally, of achieving and perceiving on the horizon of the other world the sweet fragrance of fulfillment.

### **The Fruits of Selfishness**

As we learn to be always filled with the Light and Spirit of Christ, we will always be able to see the foolishness and the disaster of the self-centeredness of men. We can then see that selfishness, if not overcome, becomes the root of all diseases of our own lives, and it is the cause for the curse of destruction that is threatening the very existence of all mankind. Selfishness inflicts the bleeding wounds in our homes, as it does in the nations of the world. Selfishness and its false ambitions are a threat to our own security and are the cause of the abuses and the destruction of a livable life. We are being surrounded by the fruits of selfishness in our own environment. For example, in a recent *Deseret News* article (Mary Finch, "Sexual Abuses of Children Is Widespread, Expert Warns," *Deseret News*, March 11, 1984, p. B1), a former Minneapolis, Minnesota, policeman is quoted as saying that in our hospitals more children are being treated for sexual abuse than for broken bones. The *Freemen Digest* reports that in America since 1960 there have been:

*47 million divorces*  
*550,000 deaths from drunk driving*  
*18 million babies killed by abortion*  
*366,000 murders*  
*9.5 million illegitimate births*

[Richard R. Viguerie, “Whatever Happened to America’s ‘Good’ People?” *Freemen Digest*, December 1983, p. 10]

The Apostle Paul in the New Testament pronounced a warning about what would happen in the latter days, that there would be perilous times:

*For men will be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*

*Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,*

*Traitors, beady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.* [2 Timothy 3:2–5]

My dear brothers and sisters, we are living in these times!

In the history of mankind the normal environmental circumstances were always favoring and protecting the family as a unit with a purpose. Just to provide the necessities of life required a man and woman to work long hours in close harmony together. There was the indisputable evidence of need—of sharing the burdens. Woman’s role was concentrated on the home with its many challenging demands requiring much ingenuity. Inescapable circumstances forced a man to be the provider and to protect and care for the family as a whole. As there was no electricity, there was no detracting influence through media. As there were no cars and no motorcycles, there was no quick transportation to alien environments away from the home. There was the constant need for overcoming and enduring for just the purpose of survival. Circumstances allowed little room for idleness, vanity, or indulging in matters of the flesh. The absence of modern medicines and hospitals created a sensitivity to man’s fragile nature and his being subject to pain and his

dependency upon matters of a spiritual nature. But just in a few generations all of these circumstances have changed! As the opportunities for development of the individual have grown in unlimited dimensions, so have the opportunities of destruction, deceit, and errors grown in the same dimension.

### **Our First Priority**

My dear brothers and sisters, let us become aware that we are living in very perilous times, that we are personal witnesses of how men’s philosophies and religions have brought this world to the brink of literal destruction. The Lord has restored in a powerful manner through living prophets the knowledge of truth and the power of its fulfillment. As the Church is growing in strength and in wisdom and is reaching out to the hearts of truth-seeking, righteous people all over the world, we must never forget that our first priority and our constant endeavor must be to be filled in abundance with the Spirit of the Lord. Only when we are filled with the Spirit can we receive the direction, encouragement, strength, and motivation necessary to establish righteousness, not only in our own lives but in our communities and the nations throughout the world. As partakers of the Restoration, we are still small in numbers, but we are encouraged to show by the fruits of our lives that the truth is with us, that we have learned in our individual lives to overcome selfishness, that we do not seek for so-called self-fulfillment in our own lives based upon the sacrifices of others, but that we find our only self-fulfillment being filled with the Light of Christ. Filled with this Light of Christ will make it easy for us to lose ourselves in the service of others and to overcome selfishness. This will be the evidence of the strength and the fruits of the kingdom.

The Lord gave some counsel with respect to the latter days as to how his disciples can be identified through their fruits:

*Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*

*Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

*A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.*

[Matthew 7:16–20]

All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel depend upon the fruits that we present to the world through the actions of our lives. It is true that we might not be able to become perfect so long as we are mortal beings, but as we are filling our lives with the Spirit, we will have few, if any, divorces to end our marriages. We will be filled with hope and joy independent of material possessions, wealth, and outward circumstances. We will love to sacrifice and go the extra mile and accept everything in our lives as from the Lord's hand and from his will. As we learn to stay in constant communication with our Heavenly Father, we will see ourselves in our weaknesses, in our wrongdoings, in our faults, and we will appreciate the help we can receive from his power to overcome, to cast aside bad habits, and to feel the joy that comes with growth in spiritual matters. With all the priorities that we may have established for ourselves, this will be the breaking point or the making point in our lives!

It might be of interest to know that when Brigham Young was the prophet and president of the Church, he had a dream where Joseph Smith appeared to him. In the course of their visit together, Brigham Young requested counsel from Joseph Smith on a specific question. He reported that Joseph came toward him and, speaking in earnest, said:

*Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small*

*still voice; it will teach you what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the kingdom. Tell the brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them, their hearts will be ready to receive it. They can tell the Spirit of the Lord from all other spirits; it will whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness, and build up the kingdom of God. Tell the brethren if they will follow the spirit of the Lord they will go right. Be sure to tell the people to keep the Spirit of the Lord. [Elden J. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City, 1971), pp. 529–31]*

Today I want to invite you, my dear brothers and sisters, to see yourselves as instruments in the hand of the Lord, that through the example of your lives you may give to the world in the environment in which you are living a light of hope. With all that you are and all that you do, you become either a blessing or a threat to the world. You are not standing alone. The eyes of the world and our pioneer ancestors are resting upon us. This is the time for us to make decisions and to establish priorities. This is the time to gain a full understanding of the message of the Restoration and then to be able to reach out, as we are filled with the Spirit, to the hungry, truth-seeking, lost and wandering children of our Heavenly Father in all the nations of the world.

As we are learning to be always under the influence of the Light of Christ, we will be able to show the world alternatives to their social, political, and economic calamities. The Spirit will teach us to be thrifty and to see in vision the end from the beginning so that we can become true, humble teachers by the actions of our daily lives, and we will be able to fill this world with renewed hope and renewed vision. Always keep in mind that you cannot permit yourself to become a failure because you may be a reason for the failure of the world!

I give you my blessing and my testimony as your brother and as your servant, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.