

the Bishops of the Church well know that the people many times have offerings to make that they cannot very well carry to the fast meeting, and by sending around and reminding the people of this duty, a great amount of good can be accomplished. I have recommended this to the Bishops in the Boxelder Stake, and where they have carried out this counsel most excellent results have followed. This is a matter of vital importance. If we neglect the poor, God will neglect us. We must look after them. Those who are so highly favored must divide their substance with them. And we must remember to observe this law of tithing. When a man's income amounts to only a few hundred dollars a year, it is a simple matter to pay tithing; but you will notice that as a man is increased in his substance, as God opens the windows of heaven and pours down blessings upon him, there is a tendency to drop off in the paying of tithing. It is easier for a man who is getting a thousand dollars a year to pay an honest tithing to the Lord than for a man who is getting ten thousand dollars a year; and it is easier for a man who gets ten thousand dollars a year to pay an honest tithing than for a man who gets a hundred thousand dollars a year. It seems to be almost impossible for a man with that enormous income to pay a just tithing to the Lord. Yet the tithing belongs to the Lord, and He expects that we will observe this law, that this may be indeed a land of Zion unto us.

Brethren and sisters, I rejoice in pondering upon the principles of the Gospel; and in my weak way I am endeavoring to observe these laws and commandments. I feel blessed in it, and I can recommend it to you. I know there is a blessing attendant upon the observance of the laws of God. I pray that His blessing may be upon the us, that His peace may be in our midst, and that His Spirit may be poured out abundantly upon the Saints in this general Conference, that we may be strengthened, edified, renewed in our faith, and encouraged to go on and accomplish the will of God. I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER ABRAHAM O. WOODRUFF.

Value of inspired counsel—The Saints expanding by faith and colonization—Success in missionary work.

I assure you, my brethren and sisters, that in occupying this position this morning I feel very humble, and very dependent upon the Lord for His Spirit to give me utterance. I rejoice in seeing so many present, and in realizing the number of aged veterans there are in our midst who lived in the days of the Prophet Joseph, and who are pleased to bear testimony of the divinity of that Prophet's mission. It is remarkable how the Lord has preserved so many of those who lived in the days of the Prophet Joseph, and I am always made glad in listening to their testimony for those who were so intimately associated with the Prophet, and who knew him best, loved him best. I thank the Lord that He has preserved the Prophet of God who stands in our midst today, and has sustained him and does sustain him by His matchless power. I rejoice in his teachings, and the people ought to appreciate the counsels given by this man of God. Many people wish they had lived in the time when Christ was upon the earth; they think they would have loved the Lord and been more devoted to Him than they are at the present time. But every time we hold a general Conference we uphold and sustain the Prophet of God as His mouthpiece, His vicegerent upon the earth, and the question arises in my mind many times, Do we appreciate the counsels that are given us from this man? Are we willing to accept of his words as the word of God? When we ask his advice, do we ask believing and expecting to carry it out, whether it comes in conflict with our own selfish desires and ambitions or not? I often feel that we do not. People ask counsel at times if they think they can get that which will be favorable to their own selfish desires; but if they thought they would get counsel which would be contrary to their own wishes, they would refrain from asking it.

In visiting the outside settlements of Zion I have been made to realize the great faith of the people. I have wondered at the works they have performed, through the faith they have in

God. Many thousands have proven beyond a doubt that they are willing to trust implicitly in the word of God as it is given through His mouthpiece. But there are others who are not so willing. There are men holding the Priesthood, who are praying from day to day that they may receive light upon certain subjects, and if the prophet of God were to say to them what course they should pursue and give them the light for which they have sought, in some cases they would decline to follow that course. But the men who will not carry out the instruction given through President Lorenzo Snow are not in harmony with God, for I testify to you that he is the mouthpiece of the Most High upon the face of the earth; and those who refuse to accept his teachings, if they do not repent, will lose the spirit of this work and will apostatize, as the Lord lives.

We have much to be thankful for in being able to meet together in this general conference. Sixty-nine years ago today the Church of Jesus Christ was organized in a little log house, with six members. Look at it today! Those who have traveled through the Stakes realize how Zion's boundaries are being extended, and how the people are growing in faith and in good works. Only those who are disgruntled believe that the Church is going backward. I tell you, the people are gaining in faith and in good works. They are colonizing the country; they are beginning to possess the earth, to own their own homes, to cultivate the soil, and they are becoming a great and a mighty people. I do not think that conditions were ever so favorable as they are today for the enlarging of the borders of Zion and for the growth of the people. Most excellent opportunities are offered for colonization, whereby the people can obtain a foothold in the land and make a living out of mother earth. The people seem to be attending to their duties and exercising a faith equal to that which has been exercised at any time since the organization of the Church.

My labors during the last year have chiefly been among the people in the outlying Stakes. I have visited our settlements in Canada, in Arizona, in Mexico, and in southern Utah, and I

can say we have in these Stakes a good people, a God-fearing people, a people who are willing to receive the counsels which God has for them through His mouthpiece. Those Stakes have been settled by people who have been called to go there, and it has seemed to me that those who had not the courage to carry out the instructions of God in establishing those places have not been able to endure the hardships and privations which came upon them, and they have therefore returned to their old homes and left those who had faith in the Lord and valued the advice He gave them through His mouthpiece, and they are among the most faithful people to be found in this Church today.

I rejoice in the labor that our missionaries are performing. I rejoice in the growth of the work of the Lord in every field; for it is growing, notwithstanding the persecution that is brought against it from time to time. As long as persecution comes from without, we can combat it, and it does not injure the work of the Lord; but when there is disunion among the people, and a tendency to disregard counsel, then there is danger in Zion. So long, however, as the leading quorums of this Church are united as they are today; so long as the people are united and are willing to receive the instructions that are given of God through His Prophet, all will be well, and the Church will continue to grow and increase. People marvel today at the growth of this work from six members. Since 1830 it has grown into something like forty Stakes of Zion and many missions in the world, and the principles of the Gospel are heard in every land where liberty is granted unto us to proclaim them. It has been decreed that this Gospel shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto every people, and then shall the end come. It is remarkable the willingness that the Elders show in responding to the calls made upon them to go to the nations of the earth to proclaim this Gospel. Many who have apparently manifested no particular interest in this work, when they are called to go forth to proclaim the Gospel, rarely ever refuse; and today there are more Elders in the world

preaching this Gospel than there has ever been. This should be indeed encouraging to the Latter-day Saints. When I think of the constant drain upon this people to maintain the missionaries in the field, I marvel at the prosperity of the people. But the Lord blesses and prospers us in sustaining these missionaries and in responding to the many calls that are made upon us. This labor is upon us to carry the Gospel to the world, that those who sit in darkness may see the light. It is incumbent upon every man who holds the Priesthood of a Seventy in the Church to go forth and preach the Gospel; and if he does not when called, it will be with him as with Paul, Woe be unto him if he preach not the Gospel of Christ when he is called by the Prophet of the Lord to go forth and proclaim it.

I have a testimony, my brethren and sisters, that this is the work of God. I know that the sick are healed; I know that the Lord answers the prayers of His people; I know that this people have been able on some occasions to even control the elements for their safety and for the upbuilding of Zion. I rejoice in being present with you this morning and partaking of the sweet influence of His Holy Spirit. Did this people ever come together with a desire to be fed with the bread of life, and they were not able to receive that which they desired? No, this has never been the case. God has always inclined His ear to this people; He has always delivered them from their afflictions; He has always blessed them. He has been indeed kind and fatherly to us as individuals and as a people. The prospects for the development and spread of this work were never brighter, never more hopeful, than they are at the present time. I admonish the Latter-day Saints in all lands to seek the counsel of the prophet of God. Do not be disobedient; do not be rebellious. The spirit of rebellion caused, we understand, one-third of the hosts of heaven to be cast out. The spirit of disobedience and rebellion has caused many a man and woman to be cast out of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The graver sins do not come into our lives all at once. Very often men can trace trans-

gression to the fact that they rebelled against the priesthood of the Son of God, and that they did not take the counsel which the Lord had given them through His mouthpiece; and they did not end with the spirit of rebellion and obedience, but they committed other great sins, and finally lost their standing in the Church of Christ. This rule will apply to us today, and I pray God that this people may ever be willing to receive the counsels which the Lord has to give through His prophet. Some become so engrossed with political parties, or with secret societies, or something of the kind, that they pay them greater devotion than they do the word of God. This is wrong. The Lord has built up this western country through His people who came here to worship Him according to the dictates of their own hearts. Let us not forget that. Let us not forget that we owe our first and foremost devotion to God, the Eternal Father. We sustain President Lorenzo Snow as the mouthpiece of God. Therefore, when he has anything to say to us as the mind and will of the Lord, it is just as binding upon us as if God spake personally to us. I oftentimes think of the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, and I sometimes think the Latter-day Saints manifest a spirit like that which was exhibited by the rich man when he was in torment on account of the evil life he had led on earth. He had brothers whom he desired to be saved, and he petitioned Father Abraham that one who had risen from the dead should go to these brothers and tell them of their ways and call them to repent. But Abraham remarked that they had Moses and the Prophets, and if they would not believe them they would not believe one though he were risen from the dead. I tell you that if we do not feel in our hearts to sustain the prophets of God, we would not believe the Lord if He were to come Himself, or if He were to send one that was risen from the dead. There is no need for the Lord to send special messengers to tell us our duty. The Lord has placed President Lorenzo Snow as the prophet, seer and revelator to this Church; and if we desire to keep in harmony with this work we must listen to the words which

the Lord God gives to us through His Prophet.

May the Lord bless you, brethren and sisters; may he pour out His spirit upon us; may we never rebel, nor lose the faith; may we be willing to receive the counsel of the Lord through His Prophet whenever it is given to us. I ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

ELDER MATTHIAS F. COWLEY.

Prophetic gift of Joseph Smith—Early manifestation of God and the ministration of Angels—Opposition of the world—God guides His work by revelation.

My brethren and sisters, I am pleased to meet with you at this conference. I humbly ask you to pray for me, that the Holy Spirit may suggest what may be said.

I rejoice in the celebration of the natal day of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and in being a recipient of the blessings which are enjoyed by the members thereof, and which have come to us, to a very great extent, through the labors incident to the establishment of this Church and the tribulations which were encountered by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Whatever characterized a prophet in olden times characterized the great prophet of the last days. We point very frequently to the remarkable fulfilment of predictions which have been uttered in ancient times by the Jewish prophets as an evidence of the divine authority which they bore and of the remarkable work which was accomplished by them in the interest of humanity. We may point with equal joy and satisfaction to the remarkable utterances of the Prophet Joseph, to establish the divine authenticity of his claim. I have never heard of a prediction uttered by that man which has not been verified, so far as time has brought the prophecy due. I have never discovered any characteristic associated with any of the ancient prophets of God in the work which they accomplished, and which went to prove their divine mission, which cannot be pointed to in the Prophet Joseph Smith and his work. He came to the world announcing a new dispensation. He did not derive his information respecting religious matters from reading the

scriptures only. He did act upon the promise of the Apostle James, contained in the Bible, (and which is applicable to our young people in securing a testimony of the truth) where he says: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." The Prophet, in the confusion which came to his mind by listening to the conflicting sentiments of the various factions of Christianity, resorted to reading the scripture for himself, and he concluded to test this passage that I have quoted. He was inspired with the same faith that actuated the ancient Saints of God—the same faith that was taught by the Savior when He said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He went into the woods to pray, and he besought the Lord to know which of all the factions of Christianity was acknowledged by the God of heaven. In answer to this prayer, he received a communication from God, the Eternal Father, in which the glory of heaven rested upon him, and in that glory there was presented before this young man two heavenly personages. When he had strength to ask the question which he desired to propound, one of these personages said unto him, "This is my beloved Son; hear him." The son informed the Prophet Joseph that He did not recognize any of the denominations. Among them were honest people, people who were doing the best they could with the light they had; but they had not been founded upon the revelations of God, and He commanded this young man that he should not identify himself with any denomination, and that if he would listen to this counsel the day would come when he should be instrumental in the hands of God in accomplishing a great and a mighty work in the earth. This young man was faithful to this injunction. He did not follow the ways of the world, and in due time he received another communication from God, in which a holy angel appeared unto him and revealed to him the existence of some sacred records, (from a translation of which Brother Rudger Clawson has read a few statements), containing a brief history of the inhabitants of this continent from a