

ment, or that it was not essential to continue it; and, of course, wherever this spirit is manifested by a Bishop or a Stake officer, what can be expected of the people? We expect that every officer in this Church will set a good example, and say to the people, Follow me; that he will not require anything of his people that he is not willing to do himself. We expect this to be the case in every organization of the Church, among the sisters as well as the brethren.

My brethren and sisters, I rejoice in the work in which we are engaged. I thank God that I am permitted to live in this day and time, and to do my small and humble part in connection with the upbuilding of His kingdom. I rejoice that my labor becomes sweeter and dearer to me every day that I live. Instead of it becoming burdensome, it becomes more of a joy and satisfaction. I thank God for His Priesthood. I honor it, and I honor my brethren with whom I am connected in this Priesthood. I pray for God's blessings upon the people, that they may be filled with His Spirit. I pray that we may be faithful all the day long; that we may not simply run well for a time, but that we may labor continually, until we shall have brought about a greater degree of perfection in ourselves and the Church of God than exists today. Those who are trying to keep the commandments of God and are measurably successful, let them labor with their fellows until there shall not be a non-tithepayer left in the Church—at least, until there is a much more satisfactory condition than there is today. Let us do our part, my brethren and sisters, to bring joy to the heart of God's Prophet, in having his desires accomplished and seeing the people respond as he would have them to this and other commandments which the Lord has given. May God's peace and blessings be upon His people. May He bless us in all our undertakings and labors, and may we go forth from this Conference with renewed determination to do His will and to serve Him all our days. May God help us all to be faithful to the end. I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### ELDER MATTHIAS F. COWLEY.

Improvements in financial affairs of the Church—Organization of new Stakes—Necessary official changes in the Priesthood—Differences among brethren should be avoided—President of the Church and other authorities should be sustained.

My brethren and sisters: I suppose that I need not ask for your faith and prayers. I always need them, and I understand it to be our duty to consider ourselves responsible as well as the speaker for the measure of the Holy Spirit that we enjoy. It is our duty also to pay the strictest attention to all that is said, and to be imbued with a determination to carry out the instructions which are given unto us.

The Latter-day Saints are understood to be a practical people. Paul said concerning the former-day Saints that the Lord would "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." I read in the newspaper recently a statement made by a man holding a legislative office, to the effect that he desired to see the wiping out of the peculiarity which characterized the Latter-day Saints. I say, God grant that it never shall be wiped out, that the Spirit of the Gospel shall never depart from us, that the principles which that Spirit has implanted in our hearts shall never be obliterated, and that we shall never cease to teach our children and our children's children that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God, that every principle which God revealed to him was divine, and that he laid his life upon the altar to establish the truth of those principles which he enunciated to the world. I hope that this peculiarity will always attach to the Latter-day Saints, and that it will become more distinct and pronounced as the years roll by. As the work of God progresses we ought to progress.

It has been now two years and a half since we first sustained President Lorenzo Snow as the successor of President Wilford Woodruff, as the Prophet, Seer and Revelator unto this Church. I want to bear my testimony to the Latter-day Saints that the work of God has always prospered, and that it has prospered most remarkably during the last two years and a half. Through a combination of circumstances that

possibly could not be avoided, and that have been met by the servants of God to the very best of their ability, the Church has been involved financially; but under the direction of the Spirit of God in President Snow this financial obligation has been greatly reduced. The hand of the Lord has been manifest in his administration to a remarkable extent. He has blessed the Latter-day Saints with the spirit to respond to the call that was made by President Snow some two years ago for the people to come to a higher standard in the observance of the law of tithing. The Latter-day Saints quite generally have responded to this call, and God has blessed them for so doing. The spirit of this principle has been more generally disseminated among the Saints than it ever has been. The presiding Council of Seventies have done a remarkably good work in presenting this subject to the quorums of Seventies throughout the Stakes of Zion. The Seventies constitute one of the most substantial, energetic and faithful bodies of men existing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the preaching and labors of this Council are to be commended. Their visits to the Stake conferences are but a small part of their work. They are constantly considering the obligation and responsibility that God has placed upon the Seventies of this Church, namely, to be messengers of God to the inhabitants of the earth; and they are all the time seeking to more thoroughly effect the organization of these quorums and to indoctrinate them in the principles of the everlasting Gospel. I believe that the authorities of the Church generally have sought to perform the duties of their calling. We have, however, our weaknesses, and we do not feel superior to our brethren who occupy different stations throughout the Stakes of Zion. The Presidency of this Church, the Twelve Apostles, the First Seven Presidents of Seventies, the Presiding Bishopric, the Patriarch—I want to testify that they are humble men; that they desire to know and understand the will of God in the performance of their duty; and that, though we entertain individual views

in regard to various matters, we generally come to a unity of faith in regard to all propositions which effect the work of God here upon the earth.

Another thing I will say, as it occurs to my mind. During the last two years and a half there has been an increase in the Stakes of Zion, possibly a greater increase proportionately in the number of the Stakes than in the population. This has been an essential step, because many of the Stakes of Zion were so large that the Presidency of the Stakes could not possibly give that personal administration which the people needed. God moved upon His servant to divide these Stakes, and it has resulted in calling into activity a great body of men and women, some of whom were previously comparatively inactive, and they have manifested a marked degree of interest and energy in the work of God. We still have other Stakes of Zion to organize; for they are extending to the east and the west, to the north and the south; and after a while we will organize Zion, as it is called, and the Stakes of Zion, as it extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

But there is great need, in all the Stakes of Zion, of a reformation in the activity of those who bear the responsibility of the bishopric, and other leading officers in the Priesthood. Some brethren have been very neglectful of their duties. Others have manifested an incapacity to perform the duties of their respective offices in the holy Priesthood. It is necessary that this should be rectified. It is not necessary, in order to obtain salvation in the kingdom of God, that a man should preside over a ward as a Bishop. When he becomes, through age, sickness or any other cause, unable to perform the duties of that high calling, it is no discredit for him to resign and give place to another man; in fact, it is a credit to him, and he ought to do it. The same may be said of the President of a Stake. Why, President Lorenzo Snow and President Franklin D. Richards—two of the humblest and most energetic men in the Church—on one occasion went to President Brigham Young and told him that if he considered that they were in-

efficient, incapable or inactive in their Apostleship, they were willing to step aside and let their Apostleship be conferred upon other men. So great was their humility and their love for the work of God that they offered to do this. In this, my brethren, there is a great principle. Every man and woman should esteem the work of God first and foremost. I have always had a joy in my heart that this was the work of the Lord. Though I have felt my own inefficiency to a marked extent, I have always had the feeling, This is the work of God, and whether I stand or fall, whether I am worthy to maintain the responsibility that I bear or not, the work of God will be maintained just the same. The work of God is not dependent upon us as individuals. It is His work, and He will maintain it.

There is another thing I want to say to my brethren in connection with our labors and associations in the Priesthood. We all have our individuality and our peculiar characteristics. It is perfectly right that it should be so; for God so designed it. He organized this earth, and He did it in such a way as to give variety. He placed thereon the mountains, the valleys, the lakes, the rivers, the seas, the vegetation and all the rest to beautify it and make it suitable for the abode of man. The Latter-day Saints have come from almost all the civilized nations under the sun, and after awhile Japan and other parts of the Orient will yield forth Latter-day Saints; for God "will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." They will come, and I say, in the name of the Lord, that no power under the sun can hinder it. No power can retard the work of God. It is the duty of the Latter-day Saints to understand this work, and to esteem the Spirit of the Gospel as the best associate that we can have.

Now I want to say that the brethren do not always dwell together in peace. David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran

down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard." I know that some Bishops do not labor as unitedly as they ought to do; and the reason is because they do not enjoy the spirit of their calling to the extent that they should, and that is the result of their not getting together and holding council meetings. They do not bring themselves in subjection to the will of the Holy Spirit, and as a consequence there is difference among them. Now, when the presiding authorities of a ward or a Stake are disunited and they do not enjoy the Spirit of God in their calling, it will effect the entire ward or Stake. The result is, in some Stakes of Zion, we need a change and a reformation, to bring about a condition that is more in harmony with the progress of the work of God. In meeting the responsibility of the Priesthood that we bear we should not allow our personal objections to our brethren to interfere with our relationship to them in the offices and labors of the holy Priesthood. I remember Brother Clawson stated here last conference that he had found one brother who did not pay his tithing because he had some personal antipathy to the Bishop. Another man did not pay his tithing because he had a personal objection to the President of the Stake. I want to say to you, my brethren, that this is all wrong. We are the servants of God. If God has entrusted a man with the responsibilities of the Priesthood, and that man from his boyhood up has honored that Priesthood, has been ready to go on missions abroad, willing to submit to the counsel of the Priesthood on all subjects, and on hand to perform the will of God in every direction, I say to you that notwithstanding the weaknesses of such a man, he is a servant of God, whom God has honored, and there ought not to be anybody in his ward or in his Stake who would entertain such antipathy to him as to cause him to refrain from performing the duties of his calling. At the same time every Bishop and every Stake President ought to put his arms around the people and make them feel that he is indeed their father. He should not rule with a rod of iron, nor with the determination to

always have his own way; but he should rule in the spirit of love and kindness for his brethren.

I believe, my brethren and sisters, that there are but few men and women in this Church who cannot be saved and kept from departing from the performance of their duty, if they are properly taught and a spirit of love is manifested for them by the shepherds of the flock of Christ; but where there is disunion and difference of opinion, and where wrong influences have asserted themselves through financial or political affairs, the effects are injurious. If we do not belong to the same political party, or if perchance we may engage in a competitive business financially, we ought not to let that divide us in spirit or place us at variance with our brethren. We cannot afford to do this, because men at times, though they may feel they have been wronged, if they are not careful they will be wrong themselves by fighting against their brethren who bear the Priesthood of the Son of God and who are appointed to preside as Bishops or Presidents, or as general authorities. I am reminded in this connection of a statement made to the Prophet Joseph Smith. As you know, in the early history of the Church they had a great many difficulties. At one time they sought to establish Zion, in Jackson county. Oliver Cowdery and W. W. Phelps were placed in charge, I believe. The Lord revealed unto the Prophet Joseph Smith the principle of the United Order, and He showed him how to establish this principle. But there was jealousy and envy among the brethren; there was a disposition to find fault one with another. The result was that the enemy came upon them and drove them from their inheritances; and the Lord uttered a decree that but few of those, if any, who were driven out should live to return. I do not know of scarcely any that are alive today of those who occupied Jackson county when that revelation was given. The Lord revealed to them how they should live. He said it was not pleasing to Him that one man should possess that which was above another. He declared that the earth was full of His bounties, and He designed that all should have enough.

He asked them to consecrate all that they had to the establishment and beautifying of Zion, and that every man and woman should be made responsible for the stewardship which their gifts and capacities fitted them for. They should have all that they needed to eat, to wear, to house themselves, and to educate and bring up their children in the ways of the Lord; but all the surplus should be consecrated for the redemption of Zion. This was the principle revealed at that time, and we shall yet have to come to that. In this connection the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"Behold, thus saith the Lord your God unto you, O ye Elders of My Church hearken ye and hear, and receive My will concerning you;

"For verily I say unto you, I will that ye should overcome the world; wherefore I will have compassion upon you."

Let me say that this revelation and voice of warning is unto the Latter-day Saints today, and it is our duty to overcome the world. There is a constant effort being made to destroy our young people by the influences and powers of darkness, and we should set our faces as flint against it. I want to raise my voice to the young people of the Latter-day Saints and ask them to attend their Sunday schools and their Improvement associations. I want to encourage them to attend to their prayers night and morning. I want to encourage them to go on missions, both young men and young women, when the Lord shall so indicate, and lift up their voices in defense of the work of God. If they will do this and be obedient to the counsel of the holy Priesthood, they will never turn aside from the work of God. Young people, guard your virtue; esteem it as dearer than the blood which flows in your veins; for God has placed a premium upon honor and chastity, and he or she who loses that gem loses something that cannot be restored in this life, if it can in the life to come.

The revelation continues:

"There are those among you who have sinned."

That is true today. There are those among us who have sinned. There are

those among us who have sat in council with the ungodly, and who have sought to overturn the counsel of the holy Priesthood, and who have set themselves up as superior in judgment and wisdom to those who bear the Priesthood of the Son of God. In this they have sinned. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark! Wherefore, repent, and do so no more.

"But verily I say, for this once, for mine own glory, and for the salvation of souls, I have forgiven you your sins.

"I will be merciful unto you, for I have given unto you the kingdom:

"And the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom shall not be taken from my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., through the means I have appointed, while he liveth, inasmuch as he obeyeth mine ordinances.

"There are those who have sought occasion against him without cause."

My brethren, there are those who have sought occasion against the servants of God without cause. They have sought occasion against the man who has stood at the head of the Church, and whom God has said we should look upon as His representative upon the earth. He said concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Ye shall receive his words as if from mine own mouth;" and the same authority and power to lead the Church was conferred upon the Prophet Brigham Young, and was extended to President John Taylor, and to President Wilford Woodruff, and now rests upon President Lorenzo Snow, who holds the keys of the work of God at the present time. There are those who have sought occasion against him without cause. Now, it is not only the man who stands at the head, and his counselors, and the Twelve Apostles, the presiding Council of Seventies and the Presiding Bishopric who bear this great responsibility of representing God, but every man who bears the holy Priesthood is a representative of God; and in his sphere and calling it is understood that he shall have the mind and will of God to administer unto the people. The Bishop of a ward, the President of a Stake, the presiding Elder of a quorum, or a presiding council of Seventies, may enjoy the revelations of the Holy Ghost to guide them in the duties of their

office. It is, therefore, not only our duty to avoid sinning against our brethren who bear the Apostleship, but it is our duty to be exceedingly kind and charitable to and assist in upholding and sustaining every officer in the Church, whether he be the Bishop of a ward, the President of a Stake, or the holder of any other position in the Priesthood. We have no right to tear down his influence among the people of God. And we are not injured by refraining from it; for there is no man, from the head of the Church down to the last ordained Deacon, who will have power to lead the people of God astray or to work any permanent injury to the cause of Christ. There is authority and power in the Church to bring every man to justice in the due time of the Lord, and it is not our business to find fault and to tear down. The Lord is no respecter of persons, and when His Prophet sinned He told him of it, according to this revelation.

"Nevertheless he has sinned, but verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me and ask forgiveness, who have not sinned unto death.

"My disciples, in days of old, sought occasion against one another, and forgave not one another in their hearts, and for this evil they were afflicted, and sorely chastened;

"Wherefore I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another, for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses, standeth condemned before the Lord, for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

"I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men."

No Latter-day Saint has any right or title to the fellowship of the Spirit of God if he entertains an acrimonious spirit against any living man or woman. God has sacrificed for our salvation. How often has President Snow told us that He required men to make sacrifices for the benefit of the whole people. He sacrificed His own beloved Son, that we might have redemption from the bonds of death, and also from our individual sins. He suffered His Son to die a most ignominious death, that the resurrection might be brought to pass. The Prophet Joseph Smith was raised up in this dispensation to stand at the head thereof, and he suffered all kinds of ignominy and scorn at the

hands of men outside the Church, and treachery and perfidy at the hands of apostates inside the Church; and finally, commensurate with the importance of the great message which he bore, he gave the last evidence that can be given by man upon earth to establish the divine authenticity of any principle—he gave his life. His blood was shed in Carthage jail. He was an innocent man, free from sin; for God had forgiven his little trespasses and imperfections. He was a man of God, a pure, upright man; a man that not only honored God, but he loved his fellow man and honored the nation that gave him birth. He laid it down by the revelations of the Holy Spirit that God founded this government by inspiration, which rested upon the patriotic fathers, who gave their blood to establish liberty upon this land. Such was the Prophet Joseph Smith. But he was not a perfect being; he was not free from weakness; neither are we. I was going to say, I thank God that my brethren are not; for if they were free from imperfections I would not be with them. They say misery likes company, and I am glad they have imperfections; for I feel at times as though I was exceedingly imperfect. When I see the standard of righteousness that belongs to the Gospel of the Son of God, I feel so immeasurably below it that I feel almost unworthy to be a member of the Church, to say nothing of being an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. It scarcely ever enters my head that I am one, only I remember that I have been ordained, and I am constantly stirred up with a feeling that I must do my duty, I must declare this Gospel, or I will be damned; but the thought of being superior to any Elder, or Seventy, or Priest, Teacher, or Deacon, has never entered my heart; nor do I believe it enters the hearts of my brethren who bear the Apostleship, for they are humble men. They have not chosen themselves; God has chosen them by the voice of inspiration through the Prophet who stands at the head of the Church.

Remember, my brethren and sisters, these few verses that I have read from Section 64 of the Doctrine and Covenants. There is also another statement

in it in connection with the authorities of the Church, and it will not only apply to a Bishop or to the presiding authority of any Stake in Zion, but also to the Apostleship and to every man who bears responsibility in the holy Priesthood. It says:

"And even the Bishop who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships, shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead;

"For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her,

"And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

"And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen."

Now I want to say a word in regard to the people of the world adopting the ordinances of the Gospel, alluded to this morning by Elder Reed Smoot. I believe I sat upon the stump of a tree in the State of Virginia and read a prophecy by President Joseph F. Smith that the day would come when the ministers of sectarianism would teach the doctrines of this Church, and it would be a strong delusion among the people. The sects of the day, my brethren and sisters, have a greater knowledge respecting the strength and force of this work than they admit to the people. They keep the people of the world in the dark in regard to the truth, and they are afraid to open their doors and let the people come in and hear the truth enunciated by the servants of God. I recently visited every State in the Eastern States mission. President E. H. Snow took great pains to see that I had the opportunity of bearing my testimony in every State of his Mission. In a prominent little city of one State the Elders circulated handbills from house to house, and after it was done, the sectarian ministers visited from house to house and gathered up the handbills, and asked the people not to go and hear us. I want to say that I am not afraid to hear the representatives of any denomination on earth, nor to give them the opportunity of presenting their views. But the adversary is at work. He has understood the work of God from the beginning. He sought

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to destroy the Prophet Joseph Smith in the very outset. He sought to destroy the Son of God when He was on earth; and when he could not do that he sought to tempt Him, promising Him that if He would worship him he would give Him all the kingdoms of this world. He also sought to tempt the Prophet Joseph Smith to use the Book of Mormon for financial gain; but God had given him commandment that he should not make merchandise of sacred things, and he did not yield to the tempter. When the ministers found that they could not overturn the work by their arguments, they incited the people to resort to mobocracy. The Saints were hounded from place to place, Apostle David Patten and others were slaughtered; and finally the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were cruelly assassinated in Carthage jail, sealing their testimony with their blood, and the Saints of God were driven to these mountain valleys. And now they have come to realize that it is useless to try to mob the work out of existence, and they cannot overturn it by fair and open combat from the Bible, so they are adopting the method of teaching the doctrines that we teach. Now, I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that there is no need of going outside of this Church for the healing of your sick by Christian Science or by any other institution in the land which seeks to counterfeit the power of God. That there are good people among them all is true; but their doctrines are not of God. God has revealed this work. He has given us a testimony of the truth, and He expects that we will use the authority of the Priesthood and the faith He has planted in our beings to heal the sick and to accomplish the work which He has assigned unto us, and that we will not fellowship these other institutions by giving them our patronage. It is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord that we should do so.

In conclusion, my brethren and sisters, I want to bear my testimony. I feel well in the work of God. I love President Lorenzo Snow; I love his counselors, President Cannon and President Smith. I ask God to heal President Cannon and return him home in

safety. I ask the Latter-day Saints to pray for him with the intensity of their souls, and pray for others who are afflicted. I love my brethren of the Twelve Apostles, and our most venerable brother, President Brigham Young, who has spent his life in the ministry, and who has been on hand for the work of God, whether to preach the Gospel or to shoulder his musket in defense of the people against the Indians, as had to be done in the early history of the Territory. I love the Seventies, the Bishopric, the Patriarch, and all my brethren and sisters. I am glad to express this love and fellowship for you. I pray for you night and morning, and I ask you to remember me in your faith and prayers. God will vindicate this work, and we must have faith in it. Out of Israel, says Isaiah, I will gather Israel. It is not everyone that will stand and be faithful. As Elder Clawson said this morning, of the ten virgins five were wise and five were foolish. Let us try and not be numbered among the foolish ones. Let every Bishop, when he returns home, endeavor to straighten up his ward; let every President of a Stake do likewise with his Stake; and let every man, woman and child infuse the spirit of this conference into their families, that the power of God may be among the people, and that we may not be as trifling children, quarreling over fences, or over politics, or those things that canker the heart and destroy the fellowship of the brethren and sisters one for the other. Do not forget that this is the work of God, and not of man. God bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ANTHON H. LUND.

Humility, union and true greatness.

I am happy to see so many of the Saints present on the first day of our Conference, and I have rejoiced in the instructions given by the brethren who have addressed us. I was much impressed with the remarks of the last speaker. He bore testimony that the leading brethren in the Church are humble men. The Apostles have just concluded their quarterly conference, and one of the subjects dwelt upon was this principle of humility. It was