

be poured out upon those that yield obedience to the truth throughout all the world, and may the power of truth, the power of testimony, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, rest mightily upon His servants who are sent forth to preach the Gospel to the world.

I have to say this to my brethren and sisters: That I believe conscientiously, from all that I know, that the day never has been when Zion was more thoroughly equipped, more thoroughly furnished in good works, when there was a better spirit or a more united feeling existing among the people of God than exists today. I believe that the people of the Lord are more prosperous today than ever they have been. I believe they are more firmly established in the truth than they ever have been before. I believe, in other words, that we are continually growing and increasing in the knowledge of God and in good works, and in faith, power and determination to carry out and consummate the will and purpose of God in the earth.

I want to say to the people here that there never has been a time, within my knowledge at least, or within my knowledge of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, when the Saints paid a better tithing than they did during the year 1901. I have this to say as a word of encouragement and congratulation to the people throughout all the Stakes of Zion. You have done better than you have ever done before, and we hope that you will continue to do better in this respect, and that you will continue to do better in all other respects throughout the year 1902, and so continue on and on, from year to year, until we shall be perfect in the sphere in which God calls us to act, as the Father and the Son are perfect in their more exalted and glorious sphere in which they act.

May the Lord bless Zion, and may the Spirit of the Lord rest mightily upon His servants that shall address you during this conference, in my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

Necessity for experienced Elders in the mission-field—Responsibilities of the Seventy—None should shrink them.

It is rather unexpected to me, my brethren and sisters, to be called upon this morning to address this great congregation; nevertheless, I esteem it a very great privilege and honor to have the opportunity of standing up in this general conference to bear my testimony to the truth of the glorious work that God our Father has established upon the earth in this dispensation, and I sincerely hope that the few moments I occupy I may be directed by the Spirit of the Lord to say something that will be of some advantage to those who are assembled here. I believe that the Elders of the Church of Jesus<sup>us</sup> Christ of Latter-day Saints feel the need of the inspiration of the Lord when they stand up to address the people, and that without that inspiration their words are very weak, indeed like unto sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; yet, by the blessings of the Lord and the presence of His Holy Spirit, men who may be looked upon as weak are oftentimes led to say things that are of the utmost value. I hope that this Spirit may rest, not only upon your humble servant at this time, but upon all the servants of the Lord who shall stand up during this conference to teach the people the will of the Lord; and I believe that we have it in our own power, to a very great degree, to call down the blessings that we desire at the present time. We have assembled from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west, that we may worship the Lord our God; and if we have come together with the desire in our hearts to be blessed of our Father in heaven, and our prayers ascend to Him that He will be mindful of us, we have a right to hope, from the promises He has made to His people, that He will hearken to our prayers, and that He will pour out His blessings upon us in rich abundance.

I have rejoiced exceedingly in the few words that have been spoken to us by Prest. Joseph F. Smith, and I believe that a feeling of joy has permeat-

ed this entire congregation, and that we feel, as has been expressed by the president, blessed of the Lord, and that there is a spirit of unity and determination to keep the commandments of the Lord resting upon the people. This conference has opened in an exceedingly auspicious manner. I do not suppose there has ever been a conference in the history of the Church when a larger body of the people was gathered together at the opening session than there is today.

My mind of late, brethren and sisters, has been led out a little in relation to the work that is being performed by the Elders of the Church as missionaries abroad, and I feel that if I can have the Spirit of the Lord I would like to offer a few remarks upon this missionary labor, and upon the class of men that are being selected from time to time to bear the message of the Gospel to the people of the world.

I rejoice in the opportunities that are given to the young men of Israel to go forth, clothed with the authority of the Holy Priesthood, and authorized to cry repentance to the people, to teach the children of men the wonderful purposes of the Almighty, and to expound to them the doctrines of the Gospel as they have been revealed anew in these latter times through the great Prophet, Joseph Smith. It is a glorious privilege that the young men of the Latter-day Saints enjoy, to go forth in this manner, to call the attention of the peoples of the world to the purposes of the Lord. In the missionary field they receive an experience that is invaluable; and we rejoice, as fathers and mothers and as servants and hand-maidens of the Lord, in seeing the return of young men from the missionary field who are filled with the inspiration of heaven, and who have gained valuable testimonies concerning the work of the Lord while they have been ministering words of salvation to the people. Many young men go out from our midst who have never had any experience outside of the Church, and who have never been brought in contact with any of the religious denominations of the world; yet when they come in contact with these denominations and meet profes-

sors of religion who have been specially educated to teach the people the dogmas the sects believe in, it in no wise lessens the faith of the Utah-born boys. In fact, coming in contact with the outside world and with the religious ideas that prevail among men seems to strengthen their faith, and they return home a thousand times firmer in their knowledge of the Gospel than they were before they left their homes to preach to the people.

Therefore, I do not wish any feeling to arise in your mind, from the remarks I desire to make, that I am opposed to the sending forth of the young men who are going from day to day to represent the Latter-day Saints. I look back twenty years to the time when the opportunity was given to me, as a boy to go out as a missionary, and I thank God with all the strength of my soul today that that opportunity came to me in the days of my boyhood. I have thanked the Lord for twenty years that I was sent at that time upon my first mission—taken, as it were, as a brand from the burning, and made to understand the blessings that Almighty God had showered upon me in being born in the midst of this people, and in having good and godly parents, who made strong impressions upon my mind favorable to the work of the Lord by their upright lives and by their testimony concerning the truth of the Gospel. And I look forward with anticipations of joy to having sons myself, at no distant day, abroad in the nations lifting up their voices in proclamation of the same truth that I was sent to proclaim twenty years ago.

Nevertheless, my brethren and sisters, I have felt, in meeting with the Council of the Seventy and with the Apostles to set apart missionaries, that there is a lack of men of experience going abroad to represent the Latter-day Saints. I believe that all the missions would be greatly strengthened if, when word is sent out from the Presidency of the Church that a number of missionaries are required, the Bishops and Stake Presidency, in looking over the ground, would turn their attention occasionally to men of experience. It is no uncommon thing to find a com-

pany of young men going out as missionaries who have never had any experience in travelling—perhaps never been outside of the state in which they were born—and not one among them of experience who can be placed in charge, to watch over them, and to give them counsel as they journey to their fields of labor. And in the missions, I know from my own experience in the European mission (and I suppose this condition prevails in other missions) that it is sometimes a difficult matter to find a man to preside over a conference who has had experience. I have the feeling that if we would pay a little more attention to the manner given of the Lord for the calling of missionaries there would be more men of experience selected to perform this labor. The Lord has said, in the revelation concerning Priesthood, section 107 of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

"It is the duty of the traveling High Council to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the Gospel, instead of any others."

If, when a call goes from the Presidency of the Church for missionaries, the Presidents of Stakes and Bishops would keep in mind this communication from our Father in heaven, I believe there would be more Seventies gathered in from the large number of quorums that exist than are now being called upon missions. I believe that God Almighty has placed the responsibility of preaching this Gospel upon the shoulders of the Seventy; that it is their peculiar calling; that the Lord expects men who have received this appointment to be in preparation for the accomplishment of the labor that specially belongs to them; and I do not think that the Presidents of Stakes and Bishops, when required to furnish missionaries, should look to the young men only, but they should look into the quorums of Seventy and be anxious to fill the calls made upon them from time to time from the ranks of the Seventy to a greater extent than they are now being filled.

In making these remarks I do not have any feeling to shift any responsi-

bility from my own shoulders or from the shoulders of my brethren with whom I am associated in the Council of the Seventy, on to the shoulders of other men. We are anxious in relation to this matter. We are traveling among the quorums of Seventy to a considerable extent, and we are teaching our brethren all the time that God has placed this responsibility upon them, and that they should try to put their affairs in shape that they may be prepared to respond. I realize that the great majority of the Seventies are men of families, who cannot lay down their affairs quite so readily as the young men who are unmarried. It is much easier for the young men to go upon missions than it is for men of families. Sometimes excuses are offered, and men say they cannot go without making sacrifices. I feel to say to the Seventies that if they put off going upon missions until they can go without making sacrifices, the time will never come when they will be prepared to respond to missionary calls. Men who have received the Priesthood of a Seventy should be anxious to be in a condition to discharge the duty that God requires of them. They should read that which the Lord has given by revelation through His Prophet concerning the responsibility that rests upon them. The Lord says:

"The Seventy are also called to preach the Gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world. Thus differing from other officers of the Church in the duties of their calling."

The Lord also says, in this same revelation:

"The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling High Council, in building up the Church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations—first unto the Gentiles and then unto the Jews."

I feel in my whole being that men who are Seventies should have a desire in their hearts to accomplish this labor which God has designated as belonging to them. There should be no disposition in the heart of any Seventy to roll off the responsibility of preaching the Gospel on to the shoulders of the Dea-

cons, or the Priests, or any others; but they should feel, "I am ready; God has called me to be a witness among the nations of the earth, and I desire to bear my full share of this responsibility, that I may enjoy a fulness of the promised blessing. The Lord has clothed me with the authority; He requires the preaching of the Gospel at my hands, and I propose to put myself in a condition to be ready for these appointments." I believe that is the spirit that should actuate the brethren who have been called to be Seventies. I desire to ask the Bishops and the presidents of stakes to look among the quorums of the Seventy, and assist the Council of the Seventy in procuring missionaries from them. I believe that the doing of this will greatly strengthen the hands of the mission presidents, and be a source of strength to all the missions in the world. There are thousands of men and women in the nations who have received the principles of the everlasting Gospel, who understand the first principles of the Gospel, and who are well grounded in the faith. They need some men of experience in their midst, who can counsel them, and who can feed them better oftentimes than a young and inexperienced missionary can. My experience leads me to say that there are a great many men abroad who are as well or better qualified to preach the Gospel than some of the missionaries who are sent into their midst.

As I have said, I rejoice to see the young men being sent forth. I want my own sons to go. I believe every father and mother, who has a testimony of the truth of the everlasting Gospel has the same desire in relation to their sons. But I would feel to rejoice in my heart in the going of my sons, if I knew that there were with them men of experience and understanding, men thoroughly established in the Gospel, and men who could take them by the hand and lead them and act to them in the place of a father. I would feel that they were in safer hands in the company of such men than if they were with the young men altogether. I therefore recommend to the brethren not to overlook the quorums of the

Seventy, but to furnish more missionaries from that band of men who have been designated of the Lord as being especially responsible for the preaching of His word.

I bear my testimony, my brethren and sisters, to the truth of the work in which we are engaged. I know it to be of God. I prize the testimony that the Lord has given me concerning this work above all else in the world. I pray with all my heart that God will help me to retain that testimony, and to labor in the midst of the people, whether it be at home or abroad, as I may be directed by those who preside over me, so that I may fill up the measure of my days in the way that He desires. I pray that this blessing may be upon all the people, that we may be true to God, true to each other, true to the covenants that we have made with our Father in heaven in holy places, and that the accomplishment of the purposes of the Almighty and the building up of His kingdom may be the desire of our hearts; for this will bring to us eternal life in the presence of our Father, the reward that God has promised to the faithful; and the gaining of this blessing should be the very strongest desire of which we are, or can be possessed. God bless us and help us to be true and faithful, help us to honor and respect the authority of the Holy Priesthood, help us to hold up the hands of the men of God who preside over us and to hearken to their counsels, that the purposes of the Almighty may be fully accomplished in the earth, in my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### ELDER GEORGE REYNOLDS.

The growth of Zion—Development of Sunday School work.

My brethren and sisters, realizing that I should have to speak next for a few moments, I have been trembling upon my seat, but asking myself the question, Why should I fear to stand up before my brethren and sisters? Do I not know that this is the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Yes, most certainly. Do I not hold a portion of the Holy Priesthood? Assuredly I do. Have I not for many years been a member of the Church, endeavoring to understand the principles of eternal life