

ELDER M. F. COWLEY.

The Saints responsible to God—How we are regarded by the world—United order versus socialism—Necessity of exact compliance with law of tithing—Development of natural resources—Important general duties.

My beloved brethren and sisters, I rejoice with you in the privilege of attending this conference, and, feeling my weakness in standing before you. I am anxious that you will sustain me by your prayers of faith, that the Holy Spirit may suggest, as He has done to the other brethren, what ought to be said.

Many good things are said to us, and the benefit that we shall derive from them will depend upon the use we make of them. We should not be hearers of the word alone; we should be doers of it. It is the doing of the word of God, the keeping of His commandments in all things, that will count to our credit, to our salvation from the evils of this life, and to our complete redemption from the effects of sin and the fall, in the life which is to come.

This is a practical work. It is a work in which every individual should feel a personal responsibility—a responsibility that awakens a consciousness in our souls that God expects something of us, and that we are accountable to Him for the light which we have received. We are indebted to the Lord, and not to man, for the light that we have, and for the situation that we occupy before the world in a religious sense. I claim that every favorable condition surrounding the Latter-day Saints and every blessing we enjoy, whether it be spiritual or temporal, is due to the Gospel and the great work God has established. Our situation in these mountains is not the result of the wisdom of man. A gentleman said to me the other day, as we were coming through Echo, "When Brigham Young established himself and his people in these mountain valleys he made no mistake. He understood that it was the best spot of earth between the Missouri river and the Pacific coast, and was the place for the people." Of course, he told the truth, but he did not wish to acknowledge that President Brigham Young was

guided in the selection of this land by the spirit of revelation from God. He did not feel to acknowledge that God had His hand in it at all. It is the same in regard to every other feature of this work. We had pointed out to us this morning very clearly, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost upon Elder Taylor, how that the Gospel, restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith, is affecting the religious world. This is true, and they are proving that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, whether they believe it or not. But they are not adopting our ideas for the purpose of drawing interest to this work, or of establishing any disposition in the hearts of the people to investigate what they call "Mormonism." They have no such purpose in view. And in this connection I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that understanding as we do that these truths have emanated from God,* and have been presented to us in His revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith, we ought not to be so blind as to go off after some kind of a side issue.

I met a brother some time ago who was quite prominent in the community where he lived, and he had organized a little socialistic party, which, I suppose, from a political standpoint, he had a right to do; but he told me that all the people ought to be socialists, for the reason that socialism, he said, is the United Order, and the more we can get to join the Socialist party the easier it will be to establish the United Order when the time comes. I had to ask him if he was so blind as to believe that after God has revealed the principles of the United Order, and the people are not prepared to carry them out, you can go to some institution of the world and find those principles and exemplify them for the benefit of mankind. I told him that no matter how near the world come to the theories of the Gospel, no matter how much they try to establish them, without the Spirit of the Gospel and the authority of the Holy Priesthood they never can carry them out, worlds without end. Humanity is too selfish to

carry out these great laws of God. The disposition of the world to accept some of the theories and doctrines of the Gospel as enunciated by the Prophet Joseph Smith over 70 years ago, is designed by the adversary as a delusion more than anything else. I remember trying to show a preacher that these doctrines, some of which he claimed to believe, had been advanced by the Prophet Joseph Smith over 70 years ago. He wanted to deny it, but could not bring the proof to sustain his denial. He said that the principle of the redemption of the dead was intimated by some theologians before the days of Joseph Smith. In this way they are trying to keep the people from the fountain of truth. In effect they say to the people: We have the law of tithing, we have the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, and we believe in infant salvation, and you need not join the Latter-day Saints for these doctrines. They are commencing to say that they have the doctrine of the redemption of the dead, and that the spirits are preached to in the spirit world, and it is not necessary to go to the Latter-day Saints to find out those things. By this means they are seeking to keep the people in the dark and away from the authority of God where the ordinances of eternal life are to be found.

With the testimony that we have of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, I say that no Latter-day Saint is justified in going after these spirits and following after these institutions in the world, whether they be of a spiritual or of a temporal nature. God has established His work, and within it is found every element that is essential for the salvation of the people, temporally and spiritually. The Lord has revealed unto us a plan of temporal salvation. He has given us the law of tithing. He has said that if we abide by that law this land shall be a land of Zion unto us, and by this law it shall be consecrated. This is the word of the Lord to the Latter-day Saints, and in connection with it He has promised that the seed of the

righteous shall never be found begging for bread. Have we faith, my brethren and sisters, to carry out the laws of God, that we may enjoy the blessings which come from obedience thereto? As has been stated, men of the world have discernment enough to see that there is some power in this work which they do not comprehend. One of our leading senators, who is now deceased, made the statement in California that the "Mormon" Church was the only religious institution on earth that contemplated the temporal salvation of its members. He stated that in the city of San Francisco were people reveling in wealth, while side by side with them were others in the dregs of poverty; but the "Mormon" Church, he said, looked after the poor. By their law of tithing they see that no one suffers, they build their temples and their sacred houses; and after awhile, by their law of consecration and stewardship they claim to have a union in spiritual and temporal things that will bind the people together completely.

My brethren and sisters, it is our duty to keep these glorious principles in view. I do not know of any path of safety for the Latter-day Saints, only that which finds us in the discharge of every duty. When our tithing is due, we should pay it, and not put it off to the end of the year. If we use that which belongs to the Lord, when we come to settle our tithing it will not be on hand, and in all probability we shall find ourselves unable to pay an honest tithing. Those who have indulged in this practise ought to repent of it. We should pay our tithes when our substance comes to us. And we should pay in kind, and not substitute something that is inferior to that which we ought to pay. In ancient times the Lord forbade this. I recall that the Lord actually pronounced a curse upon anyone who would offer as a sacrifice anything that had a blemish, or that was old and useless. It was designed that the offering should be clean and pure and without blemish, that it might symbolize in the best possible manner the offering of the Son of

God. The law of tithing is similar. God does not demand of us the very best, and yet He would not be displeased if we were disposed to offer the best; but He is not pleased when we select from our substance that which is the poorest and bring it into His storehouse. You perhaps remember the law in ancient Israel regarding the selection of animals that were to be consecrated as tithing. The Lord said, that every one that passed under the rod should be holy to the Lord. As I understand this, they had what we would call a corral, and as the animals passed out one at the time, every tenth one was marked by a rod in the hands of the man who stood at the entrance, and that one was holy unto the Lord. He did not demand the best, nor did He justify the selection of the poorest; but He dealt fairly with the people. Yet He has dealt with us far more generously than He did with ancient Israel. When we think of how He has blessed us in this glorious land—how the people are extended from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south—Fifty-one stakes of Zion—and how we have increased and prospered, surely He has blessed us exceedingly.

I almost shudder sometimes when I hear men say they have made great sacrifices for the Gospel's sake. Have we made any sacrifice for the Gospel's sake? Is it a sacrifice for a man to lay aside his sins? Is it a sacrifice for a man who is addicted to tobacco, to lay it aside? or addicted to liquor, to repent of that evil? or addicted to profanity, to lay that aside and honor the name of Deity? or a violator of the Sabbath day, or guilty of any vice, to lay that aside and purify himself by obedience to the laws of God? Why, it is no more of a sacrifice to the immortal spirit of man than it is to wash our bodies when they are unclean. Now, I have never been across the ocean, and I have not personally witnessed the temporal condition of the Saints of God in Europe; but I have been in the United States, and I have mingled with the Saints in various parts of the

Union, and I have found scores and scores of families that did not own one foot of land, did not own the house that covered them, and did not own a horse or a cow. They were simply tenants. What has brought a change to these families and made them prosperous in these mountain valleys? Has it not been the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Has it not been the principle of gathering? I see the Salvation Army has adopted the principle of gathering now. They are gathering and colonizing. But it is the great work of God that has brought us here. Where in all these Stakes of Zion are the families that have no home of their own? What percentage of those living in rural districts do not possess their own homes, with teams and cows, and other resources of employment? How many are there in such a destitute condition as they were in the world? I will venture to say that there are very few indeed. And let me say further, if the Latter-day Saints were prepared to carry out the counsel of the servants of God there would be a still better condition among us than there is today, speaking from a temporal standpoint.

You heard what Brother Heber J. Grant said yesterday in regard to the effort that had to be made to establish and maintain one little sugar factory in the community. Men feared to invest for the benefit of the people, and the Lord came to the assistance of His servants. He inspired President Woodruff to say that it was the will of the Lord that that should not be a failure. Nevertheless we had to send outside and borrow money of the Gentiles, in order to establish that industry; but they have been paid back, and the enterprise is a great success. So I say we have not sacrificed very much temporally for the Gospel's sake. When it comes to religious matters, what kind of houses of worship had we in the world? It is only recently that we had any of our own at all. Down in the Southern States they used to burn them up almost as soon as they were built. I believe the last one they built was in

Kentucky, and in order that it might not be burned down they insured it; but the mob took axes and cattle and tore it down, and pulled the logs apart with their oxen, in order to beat around the protection our people had placed upon it. No matter about that; as I was saying, our people had very few nice houses of worship to meet in before they gathered to Zion. What do we find here? In almost every ward we find a suitable place of worship, and we are improving in this direction all the time. We have a most beautiful house in Pocatello—just as good as any in Salt Lake City, I believe. They are building another one at Wellsville. Then, we have not sacrificed anything in that direction, have we? And when you talk about forsaking father and mother, sister and brother for the Gospel's sake, how much of a sacrifice have we made? What did Jesus say to His disciples when they asked, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" He said unto them, "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Maybe you forsook your father and mother; maybe they turned their backs upon you. What if they did? You have come to this land and found fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, just as the Son of God said to His disciples. One came unto him and said, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee;" and He asked, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" Answering the question himself, He pointed to His disciples and said, "'Behold my' mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." And have you not found it thus? What else can we say? Why this: that the man who forsakes his father and mother for the Gospel's sake has accepted something in the Gospel that will bring his father and mother, his sister and brother to him, and they will fulfill the words of

the Prophet Obadiah that "saviors shall come up on mount Zion."

I might say more in this line if there were time, but let me say to the Latter-day Saints that we ought not to talk about sacrificing for the Gospel's sake. We ought not to forget the obligations we are under to God for the great blessings that He has bestowed upon us. We ought not to be unmindful of the fact that it is through the Gospel that all these blessings have come unto us. Now, it does not matter what the world do—whether they are friendly to us or not—so far as the work of God is concerned. It matters to them materially, however, whether they treat the work of God properly or not. If they do not treat it right, if they persecute the people of God, woe unto them! for thus saith the Lord, I will fight against those who fight against Zion. That is the word of the Lord to the inhabitants of the earth. But whether they oppose it or not, the work of God is onward and upward, and the principles of the Gospel are spreading abroad among the nations of the earth. I am happy to say that our Elders bring good reports, as a rule. The more they put their trust in God and travel without money and without price, the better report they bring, the stronger testimonies they come back with in regard to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the power connected with it.

I rejoice in this work, and in the opportunity of mingling my testimony with that of my brethren. I know that this is the work of God. I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I know that the men who have succeeded him in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been men of God, and that our President today is a man of God, a man of righteousness and justice, a man of example in the Gospel that is worthy of our following in every sense of the word. I say to the brethren and sisters, do not only sustain the presidency of the Church, but also sustain your Bishops, sustain your stake presidents, sustain your ward teachers, and sustain the hum-

blest in the holy Priesthood whom God has appointed unto the work of the ministry. In the fourth chapter of Ephesians Paul names the purpose of apostles, prophets, etc. He said they were for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to a unity of the faith. But he mentions another purpose—a very distinct purpose, and I thought, in listening to the remarks of Elder Taylor, that it was a very important purpose among the Latter-day Saints. The purpose is, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." My brethren and sisters, if you will bear in mind that purpose, and follow the ordained ministry that God has established in your midst, you will not go astray. Follow their counsel, pay your tithes and offerings, and sustain the work of God temporally and spiritually, and I am willing to promise you, in the name of the Lord, that you will not be led astray by the winds of doctrine that are going forth in the land. If you do not do this, you will be led away. We want men and women who accept the Gospel in its fullness; good, substantial Latter-day Saints; not those who, like the world, make a hobby of one principle and neglect all others, but Latter-day Saints who, if they go on missions and are greatly blessed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, are willing on their return to be ward teachers, or Sunday school teachers, or Deacons in the house of the Lord, and not expect to occupy all their time in standing before the people and preaching big sermons. Some of the best Latter-day Saints we have do not say much, but they do a great deal. The thing for us to do is to go to work, and we need not talk about it either. When we pay our tithing, we need not sound a trumpet before us. When we pay our fast offerings we need not publish it in the papers. But do our duty, honor God and keep His commandments, and

say nothing about it. The Lord will see us, and He will bless us. The Son of God pointed out the hypocrisy of the world in this direction. He said, "They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you. They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Remember that, my brethren and sisters, and seek God in secret prayer. And when I say this to you, I say it to myself also.

Before I close, I want to ask the Latter-day Saints to sustain the religion classes of this Church. I say that we need them. There is no family in the Church so perfect in its family government, no man and no woman has such unbounded influence over their families, but what these auxiliary institutions will be of some benefit unto them.

I want to say another thing. I said it yesterday in the Assembly Hall, and the Lord revealed it to me while I was upon my feet. If any of you have any grievances with your brethren or your sisters; if any of you stand adverse to the authorities of your Ward or Stake, or have anything against them, I ask you not to talk about it before your children. If you do, you will poison the minds of your children against the work of God, and the day will come when you will wish that you could draw it back. You will have cause to be sorry for their condition, and you will have a consciousness that you have helped to poison their minds against the servants of God and against the principles of divine truth. Remember this. It is the simple things that will secure our safety. It is the little foxes that spoil the vines, Solomon and Bishop Reuben Miller used to say. It is the performance of the little duties that will establish us in the work of God.

God bless you, my brethren and sisters. May you return to your homes renewed in your determination to serve God. Sustain the religion class work, and all

the institutions that the Lord has established in the work of God, and God Himself will sustain you by His power in time and in all eternity. Amen.

ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON.

The sin of idleness—Arduous duties of the First Presidency, the Twelve, Seven Presidents or Seventies, Presiding Bishopric and other quorums of the Priesthood.

Brethren and sisters, I trust that I shall be able to make you hear. I have rejoiced exceedingly in the spirit and teachings of this conference. We have had a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and we are indeed a blessed people.

While sitting here, the thought occurred to me that the system and order of the Priesthood in this Church is so perfect, there is no need for any of us to waste time; and it would be a shame for a man in this Church, holding any portion of the holy Priesthood, to say he had nothing to do. It is a mistaken idea for any man to entertain, for there is plenty to do. I remember, reading in one of the revelations, a passage that bears upon this point. You will find it in Section 107 of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and these are the closing words of the revelation:

“Wherefore now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence. “He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved, shall not be counted worthy to stand.”

In another revelation—Section 68—these words occur:

“And the inhabitants of Zion, also, shall remember their labors, inasmuch as they are appointed to labor, in all faithfulness; for the idler shall be had in remembrance before the Lord.”

Again, in Section 75:

“Let every man be diligent in all things. And the idler shall not have place in the Church, except he repents and mends his ways.”

From these passages, we can see that idleness is a positive sin, and that those who indulge in this spirit, to the neg-

lect of their duties, shall be found unworthy of fellowship in the Church.

Brethren and sisters, if I can have the freedom of the Spirit, I would like to make a brief report concerning some of the general authorities of the Church. I think the Saints are justified in looking to the general authorities for an example. If the head is sick, the body will also be sick; but if the head is wideawake, the body will be full of light. This is true of the Church in all ages of the world.

First, I would like to say a word about the First Presidency of the Church. We have them with us today. They are in good health and form. We have heard their voices. I think I can truthfully say there are no three men in the Church who are busier, more industrious or whose time is more occupied, than the Presidency. There is a great weight of responsibility resting upon them. They are called to stand at the head of the Church, and direct matters pertaining to fifty-one stakes of Zion and fourteen missions. These brethren have to consider matters of moment that are submitted to them from the stakes of Zion. Many written communications of great importance are received by them, which require the most thoughtful consideration. They are in session almost daily, giving their attention to these matters. In addition to the very large correspondence which they have to answer, many of the officers of the stakes come in person and seek interviews with the Presidency of the Church. They must be seen; it is their right to be seen; they come for counsel on matters of moment and interest to the Latter-day Saints. Furthermore, many strangers call at the president's office, anxious to meet the president and his counselors, and to shake hands with them. The reputation of this people has gone abroad to the world, and many eminent people, in passing through, stop in Zion, being anxious to see those who preside over this peculiar people. And let me say to you, brethren and sisters, the stranger within our gates who desires an interview is never denied. The