

# GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

## THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

### FIRST DAY.

The Seventy-fifth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. on Thursday, April 6, 1905, President Joseph F. Smith presiding.

#### THE PROCEEDINGS.

There were present of the general authorities: Of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund; of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, Francis M. Lyman, Rudger Clawson, Hyrum M. Smith, George A. Smith, Charles W. Penrose; Presiding Patriarch John Smith; First Seven Presidents of Seventies, Seymour B. Young, Brigham H. Roberts, George Reynolds, J. Golden Kimball, Rulon S. Wells and Joseph W. McMurrin; of the presiding Bishopric, William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton and Orrin P. Miller. There were also a large number of presidents of stakes, their counselors, presidents of missions, and other prominent men of the Priesthood.

The services were commenced by the choir and congregation singing the hymn which begins:

Redeemer of Israel, our only delight,  
On whom for a blessing we call;  
Our shadow by day, and our pillar by  
night,  
Our King, our Deliv'rer, our all!

The opening prayer was offered by Elder Henry W. Naisbitt.

Singing by the choir:

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell,  
By faith and love, in every breast;  
Then shall we know and taste, and  
feel,  
The joys that cannot be expressed.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

(Opening address.)

Condition of General Contentment Among the Latter-day Saints.—What Tithing is Used For.—Unhealthy Excesses Must be Removed.—Zion is Established, and Will Remain.—The Church Not Led by Man.—The Lord Has Made the Nation Great.

My Brethren and Sister—It is certainly a great satisfaction and pleasure to me to see this large assembly of Latter-day Saints, gathered here on the opening day of our seventy-fifth annual conference. I am pleased to see you and meet with you; and with the blessings of the Lord and the guiding influence of His Holy Spirit I trust that I shall also be pleased in the opportunity afforded me at this moment of speaking to you for a short time. I feel exceedingly dependent upon the promptings of the Spirit to my mind. You may think it strange for me to say that I have had no moments to bestow upon any forethought with reference to what I shall say to you

this morning. I stand before you without premeditation or forethought as to what I shall say.

I believe that I can say to you with all confidence that so far as my knowledge extends, the Latter-day Saints throughout this intermountain region and the adjoining country, and so far as I know throughout the world, are in excellent spiritual condition. I believe that the Latter-day Saints enjoy as much today of the true spirit of their religion as they ever have enjoyed; I believe there is as much union among our people throughout the length and breadth of the land as has ever existed in the Church. I think I can confidently say that there are as few local difficulties and troubles among the people, coming before the Church courts, before the Bishops and before the High Councils, as I have ever known before within the scope of my remembrance and knowledge. We are perhaps never entirely free from little misunderstandings among neighbors and members of the Church one place or another, and it is often the case that these little misunderstandings, arising among our brothers and sisters, are brought before the teachers and perhaps before the Bishops for adjudication and reconciliation, but I think I will be justified in saying, and that the truth will verify the same, that within my knowledge and according to my best understanding, there never was, since I can remember, any less of these little misunderstandings and difficulties than exist today. Indeed I may say that misunderstandings have been far more pronounced in years that have gone by than they appear to be now.

I believe that there is a feeling of general contentment among the Latter-day Saints, and of satisfaction in their minds and hearts with reference to the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith and to the divinity of the great mission and atonement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In other words I believe that the Latter-day Saints are today as devoted, fervent and firm in their convictions of

the truth and in their knowledge thereof, as they ever have been at any period of the Church's history from its beginning down to the present time. I believe that these statements can be seconded and vouched for by the presiding authorities of the Church throughout the length and breadth of the land. We have these brethren here before us,—presidents of stakes and their counselors, the Bishops and their counselors and the presidents of our various missions; and I am satisfied that they will, one and all, verify the statements that I have made with reference to the present condition of the Church.

Not only is this so, but I believe that the time has never been when the financial, or the temporal condition, of the Latter-day Saints was better or more encouraging than at the present. I believe that our people are generally prosperous and I am satisfied that there is still greater prosperity in store for them through their continued faithfulness. I believe that the Lord will bless the earth for their sake, that He will temper the elements for their good, that He will prosper them in the labor of their hands and in the thoughts of their minds; that He will guide them by the power of His Spirit into all truth and into the possession of those temporal blessings that are so necessary to make a people happy, contented and blessed in the land. With reference to this matter I desire to say that we have I believe a very correct criterion by which to judge the spiritual and temporal condition of the Church. The records of the Church will show at the closing of the accounts for the past year that the tithing and the offerings of the Latter-day Saints have been a little above what would be called the average. We have had one or two more prosperous years in the past judging by this criterion, the tithings of the people, but last year was a little above the average, notwithstanding the fact that during the last few years our people in many parts of the country have been suffering from a protracted drouth, in which they have come short

in their crops, and have suffered materially in their flocks and in their herds. In many places the drouth has been so severe that the people have been under the necessity of borrowing means with which to secure for themselves seed grain for the present year. I want to say to you, my brethren and sisters, and especially to those who preside over the Church, that it is a matter of pride and of satisfaction to my mind that the Church is in a condition to assist those that are in need of this kind of assistance, and we have done so. If anyone should feel dissatisfied with the action of the Trustee-in-Trust and his counselors and associates in extending aid to the Latter-day Saints in such matters of extremity as this, they know where to make their complaints, and I should be glad to meet them and consider these questions. We wish it distinctly understood that while the Lord preserves us in the positions to which we have been called, the positions which we did not seek, but which, by the providence of God, have been brought upon us, we will hold ourselves responsible before God and before His people to render material and financial aid to the Saints in every direction where we feel that it is necessary to do so. Our people in the south have been unfortunate to some extent in having their dams washed away by floods. For a long series of years they have had drouth, the earth became parched and dry, and when the late rains and floods came they washed away some of their dams, and the people sent up their cries to us for help, and we have helped them. We thank God that we are in a position to help them, and so far as I am concerned I would be pleased if I could know that every dollar of the tithing that I pay to the Church is employed in some good work of this kind by which the Saints are strengthened in building up Zion, in establishing their settlements and in "holding the fort" if you please.

In addition to this I am happy to say to this congregation and to all the world so far as my words may go, that

we have taken the liberty, and we have taken pride, and still feel proud of the opportunity that has been afforded us, and of the ability that we have possessed to accomplish it—to render aid to many of our missions abroad in the purchase and in the establishment of mission headquarters and the building of churches in which they can meet to worship God, and to which they will not be ashamed to invite the stranger to come and join with them. We have used some of the tithings of the people for this purpose, and we think that when the Church desires to call us to an account for matters of this kind there is a way by which they can reach it which will not occasion any noise or confusion and I trust without any misunderstanding whatever. I believe we can come to a perfect understanding with reference to these matters. We have been able, too, to purchase quite a tract of land in Jackson county adjacent to the site that was chosen by the Prophet Joseph Smith for a temple, to be built some day; and some few of our people have generously contributed specially for the accomplishment of this purpose, but the most of the means that have been employed for the accomplishment of this object have necessarily been taken from the general tithing funds of the Church. By this means also we have been able to secure elegant headquarters for our people in the Northern States mission; we have been able to assist the Southern States mission to obtain headquarters; and we have also been enabled to assist the British mission to obtain a comfortable home and headquarters, where the "Star" that has been published for so many years, can continue to be published for the advancement of the work of the Latter-day Saints and of the Elders in the British mission. We have been able to assist largely in the erection of a commodious house of worship in Copenhagen, Denmark, also in Christiania, Norway, and also in Stockholm, Sweden; and we have assisted also in obtaining head-

quarters for our people who live upon many of the islands of the sea. We have secured a tract of land upon the Islands of Samoa for the purpose of gathering our Saints where they can receive the benefits of Church organization, the benefits of Sunday schools, Mutual Improvement associations and Sabbath worship, and where they can be taught the arts of industry and self-support. We have assisted our people in Australia and New Zealand in a similar way. And withall we have met more than one-half of the bonded indebtedness of the Church; and we are in a condition, when the time shall be ripe for it, provided the Saints continue to meet their obligations in their tithes and offerings, to pay off the remaining portion of the Church indebtedness; when, I trust, by the blessings of the Almighty, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will see a day in which it will be absolutely free from debt and under obligation to no man; and it will not be long before this consummation is realized if we continue our work in the future as we have done it in the past.

Now, my brethren and sisters, it is not my purpose to continue my remarks very long. I desired briefly to refer to these matters of which I have spoken, and it just occurs to my mind that in addition to the few things I have named—and I have not named them all—that it would be very proper for me to state that the Church with a very small assistance from the estate of Dr. William H. Groves, has been able to erect a first-class, well appointed hospital in this city, fire proof in every way, and equal to the best that can probably be found in any part of the world. We have been found fault with for this, that is to say, we have been charged with (hesitating)—pardon me if I do not mention that. It is too small a matter. However, we have cranks, you know, among the Latter-day Saints as well as among the people of the world; and every once in a while you come across an individual who is all one-sided, who can only see out of one eye and out of a

very small corner of the one eye, too, who is not capable of comprehending more than one thing at a time, who selects a certain little hobby—a certain little idea, a single thought, and straddles that idea and that single thought and commences to ride it, and it is impossible to unhorse him from his hobby, because his mind is not capable of grasping more than that single little thought. We have such individuals as that, and it was from one of these individuals, one of these cranks, that we received not long ago solemn objection to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints putting any of its means or tithing into a hospital. It was wicked and wrong to build hospitals according to his idea. Well, we will let such people go for what they are worth; they are scarcely worth noticing, and I feel that I should not have noticed it at all; but we have such individuals among us more or less. We have a variety of curiously formed creatures rising up amongst us occasionally, who are filled with the spirit of evil and hatred towards the truth and the people of God. It is only natural that this should be so.

It has occurred to me somewhat in this way; that the body of the Church is likened to the body of a man, and you know men do sometimes get their systems a little deranged—that is to say, sometimes they are flea-bitten. Fleas bite them and mosquitoes bite them and cause little swellings to rise on their faces and hands. Sometimes they have boils upon them, and carbuncles, sebaceous tumors and other excrescences, that only need the application of the lance to let out the humor from them or to excise them from the body, or cut them off and let them go, so that the body may be cleansed from their poisonous effects. It is so with the Church. From time to time there are characters who become a law unto themselves and they follow the bent of their own "sweet will" until they get themselves into a condition mentally and spiritually that they become a menace to the body ecclesiastic. In other

words, they become like a boil, tumor or carbuncle on the body, and you have to call in the surgeon to apply the knife to cut them out, that the body may be cleansed from them; and this has been the case from the beginning.

From time to time these conditions arise and we have them to meet, and they will continue to arise from time to time, and we shall have them to meet; but they will never amount to more than a pimple or a little sore on the surface of the body, and no one need to be alarmed at all for the consequences. Zion is established in the midst of the earth to remain. It is God Almighty's work, which He Himself, by His own wisdom, and not by the wisdom of man, has restored to the earth in the latter days, and He has established it upon principles of truth and righteousness, of purity of life and revelation from God, that it can no more be thrown down nor left to another people, so long as the majority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will abide in their covenants with the Lord and will keep themselves pure and unspotted from the world, as all members of the Church should keep themselves. Then it will be as God has decreed, perpetual and eternal, until His will is accomplished and His purposes fulfilled among the children of men. No people can ever prosper and flourish very long unless they abide in God's truth. There is nothing, no individuality, no combined influence among men that can prevail over the truth. The truth is mighty and it will prevail. It may be slow in the consummation of its purpose, in the accomplishment of the work that it has to do, but it is and will be sure; for the truth cannot and will not fail, for the Lord Almighty is behind it. It is His Work, and He will see to it that it is accomplished. The kingdom is the Lord's, and the Lord is capable of taking care of it. He has always taken care of it. I want to say to you that there never was a time since the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, when a man led the Church, not for one moment.

It was not so in the days of Joseph; it was not so in the days of Brigham Young; it has not been so since; it never will be so. The direction of this work among the people of the world will never be left to men. It is God's work, let me tell you, and I hope you will put it down in your memoranda, and do not forget that it is the Almighty that is going to do this work and consummate it, and not man. No man shall have the honor of doing it nor has any man ever had the power to do it of himself. It is God's work. If it had been the work of man, we would have been like the rest of the world, and it would not have been true of us that God had chosen us out of the world, but we would be a part of it and "Hail fellow, well met" with it, but it is true that God has chosen us out of the world; therefore we are not of it; and therefore they hate us and they will fight us and say all manner of evil against us falsely, as they have ever done from the beginning. And they will continue to seek the destruction of the Latter-day Saints, and to feel toward us in the future as they have felt in the past. Now don't you forget it my brethren and sisters. When you go home, if you have not been in the habit of doing it or if you have neglected your duty, when you go home today or to your homes in distant settlements, carry this injunction with you: Go into your secret chambers—go into your prayer rooms and there by yourselves or with your families gathered around you, bow your knees before God Almighty in praise and in thanksgiving to Him for His merciful providence that has been over you and over all His people from the inception of this work down to the present. Remember that it is the gift of God to man, that it is His power and His guiding influence that has accomplished what we see has been accomplished. It has not been done by the wisdom of men. It is proper we should give honor to those who have been instrumental in bringing

to pass much righteousness. They are instruments in God's hand, and we should not ignore that they are such instruments, and we should honor them as such; but when we undertake to give them the honor for accomplishing this work and take the honor from God, who qualified the men to do the work, we are doing an injustice to God. We are robbing Him of the honor that rightfully belongs to Him and giving it to men who are only instrumental in the hands of God in accomplishing His purposes.

Now, may the Lord bless you, my brothers and sisters, and keep you in His holy keeping. But let me say, referring again to the last remarks, when you go home see to it that you observe this duty that devolves upon all members of the Church, to go before the Lord in prayer. Then when you rise up in the morning, before you go out into the world to engage in your daily avocations, bow yourselves before Almighty God with a heart full of gratitude and with thankful spirits before Him and unto Him, for His mercy, which endureth forever, and for His loving kindness, not only to us as individuals but to the whole people and to the whole people of our great nation. The Lord has blessed the people of our nation. The Lord has given to them the choicest of all lands upon the earth, and He has made them a great and a free people. He has blessed them with wealth and with power, not only in our own land, but power among the nations of the world. The Lord Almighty has made this nation great and He will continue to preserve it in its greatness and He will magnify it before the world so long as the people of the nation will observe honest laws, virtue, purity of life and equal justice to be meted out unto all men.

I feel proud of the nation of which we are a part because I am convinced in my own mind that there is not another nation upon the face of the globe where the Lord Almighty could have established His Church with so little difficulty and opposition as He has done here in these United States. This was a

free country and religious toleration was the sentiment of the people of the land. It was an asylum for the oppressed. All the people of the world were invited here to make homes of freedom for themselves, and under these tolerant circumstances the Lord was able to establish His Church, and has been able to maintain it and preserve it up to this time, that it has grown and spread, until it has become respectable—not only by its numbers, not only by the few years of age that it possesses, but respectable because of its intelligence, respectable because of its honesty, its purity, union and industry, and for all its virtues. It has become respectable before those who are intelligent enough to study it and who come to see and understand the truth for themselves. It is true there are those in the world who are so prejudiced and darkened in their minds that they will not see though the light shine upon them. They close their ears and will not hear, though the truth is spoken unto them, and they shut their eyes so they cannot see and close their hearts that they may not understand. Though you declare unto them the truth they will deny it and reject it. We cannot help this. God will deal with them in His own time and in His own way, and we only need to do our duty, keep the faith ourselves, to work righteousness in the world ourselves and leave the results in the hands of Him who overruleth all things for the good of those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Now may peace be and abide in your hearts. May the union that has hitherto characterized our associations continue among us. May our people continue in their love for the truth and in their love for one another. May they continue in their honesty of purpose, in their uprightness, in their industry, in the spirit of non-complaint and in the spirit of rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for the blessings that we receive, the blessings of the earth, the blessings of the Spirit of the Lord that is given to us. And I hope that we will continue during

the sessions of this conference to have a good attendance, and that we may have a peaceable spirit of love unfeigned in our hearts, one for another, joy inexpressible for the opportunity we have of meeting together in this house that has been built for this purpose and to attend to the duties that devolve upon us as members of the Church, and that we may go hence at the close of this conference strengthened in the faith, encouraged in our good endeavors, and with a renewed determination that as for us and for ours we will serve God and let the world do its worst. May God bless you is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen."

A quartet, "When the swallows homeward fly," was beautifully rendered by Sisters Hadley, Owen, Jones and Saunders.

#### PRESIDENT JOHN R. WINDER.

Satisfactory Conditions of Church Affairs.—Interesting Incidents Connected With the Work, Under God, of the Prophet Joseph Smith.—Hardships of the People in Early Days.—Settlement of the Saints in This Valley, Their Temporary Exit and Return.—Unity of Latter-day Saints in Relation to Sustaining President Joseph F. Smith, as Head of the Church.

My brethren and sisters, it affords me a great deal of pleasure this morning to have the opportunity of standing before you to endorse every word that I have heard spoken by President Joseph F. Smith. Particularly am I pleased to be able to endorse everything he said in relation to the financial condition of the Church, and everything pertaining to the expenditures. I can say to you, my brethren and sisters, that your funds are perfectly safe in his hands. First of all, I wished to make this statement.

When I look over this vast congregation of thousands of people, representing many nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples, my mind goes back to the day when the boy Joseph Smith, 14 years of age, went into the woods to pray to the Father, and when the Father

and the Son appeared to him and gave him some instructions as to how he should proceed. The thought comes to me that no sooner did he make known what had taken place than persecution commenced. From that hour his life was sought. In every way the effort was made to destroy him and his influence. Seventy-five years ago today he was enabled to organize the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with a very few members. Persecution did not cease then. On the contrary, it continued from year to year. Then when I think of the trying circumstances in which he was placed, the wonderful work that he accomplished during the few years he was permitted to live upon the earth, the translation of the Book of Mormon and the presenting of it to the people and to the world; also the production of the Doctrine and Covenants, and the announcement of many glorious principles introduced for the salvation of the living and the redemption of the dead, I marvel at the great work that he accomplished in the short space of 14 years. Then I thought of the time when the people were compelled to leave Nauvoo and come to this country, the hardships they had to endure, the travels across the plains, the many difficulties they had to encounter, and after they had arrived here the energies they put forth to establish industries for the good and benefit of the people, including manufactures of various kinds. Of necessity they constituted the governments here—the city councils, the legislatures; in fact, they were all that there were in the country. This, however, did not continue for many years. It was wonderful how the Lord blessed the people in the commencement of their labors.

I remember also how, just ten years from the day when the pioneers arrived in this valley, as we were celebrating that event at the head of Big Cottonwood, the word came that a great army of the United States was forming to come up and attack the people in these valleys of the mountains. I remember what occurred during the remainder of that summer and the