

tion. It may not be just suitable, but I will tell it anyhow:

A negro had a mule which balked, and he could not get it to move; so he went into a drug store and asked the druggist if he had anything that he thought would start the mule. The druggist came out and injected something in the region of the ribs of the mule, and immediately thereafter the negro saw a streak of dust and the animal flying over the hill. He went back to the druggist and said, "How much is it? "Twenty-five cents." "Well," said he, "Just put fifty cents worth in me, so I can catch the mule." (Laughter.)

ELDER RULON S. WELLS.

In his opening remarks this morning, President Smith stated what it was that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stood for. It was for virtue, for honesty, for all that is good and holy and right. It was this idea that inspired the Apostle James when he said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." It was no doubt the same thought that inspired the words that "faith without works is dead."

In looking over this great congregation and seeing so many of our Father's children, my mind is led to contemplate the great human family; not only those who dwell upon the earth today, but all who have ever trod this planet. When our first parents came to this earth they partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and thereby learned to discriminate between good and evil. From that day until the present, all mankind have come in contact with the good and with the evil. Every man and woman will appreciate what I say when I call attention to the fact that this warfare between good and evil is known to every one of them. It is a battle that we all must fight. With that knowledge of good and evil we are also in possession of what is known as

free agency. We can choose the good and reject the evil, or we can choose the evil and reject the good. But to every one of us will come the momentous question, Which shall we choose? and we shall be called upon to decide. So that when the statement is made that the Church of Christ stands for the good, it seems to me that that describes our religion. The purpose of our Father in heaven in revealing the Gospel of Jesus Christ was that He might convert the people of the world to eschew evil and to follow the good. It was that we might be cleansed and purified from the evil with which we all come in contact. Sin is in the world, and all humanity to some extent has partaken of it. Therefore it became necessary that a plan should be devised whereby we might be redeemed and saved from the consequences of sin. The two influences mentioned are abroad in the land. One is striving with the children of men to save their souls. It is the Spirit of the Lord, that divine essence which issues forth from the Father and the Son, and is within the reach of every one of us. If we harken to that "still small voice" of the Spirit of God, it will lead us in the way of good. It will help us to fight the battles of life, and finally lead us to salvation. It will result in making us good men and women, and prompt us to do good to all. It will make itself manifest in noble deeds, in righteous lives; it will elevate us, and fit and qualify us to be indeed the children of God. If, on the other hand, we hearken to the evil one, it will lead us downward. It will result in the doing of evil deeds; will lead us down to degradation, and destroy our souls.

I do not need to advance any argument in proof of this. It is something that might be called an axiom. It is a self-evident truth, and is known to all mankind. The grand purpose then is that we might be cleansed from sin. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of life and salvation. The Gospel has been revealed to mankind in order to enable us to resist the powers of evil. It has been called the pow-

er of God unto salvation. A plan of redemption was necessary. There are many people who say, "Oh, if I lead a moral, upright life, that is all that is necessary." Supposing we grant that for the sake of the argument, the all-important thing is that we shall be cleansed. It is, however, impossible for us to please God unless we believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. If our lives are going to result in righteous deeds, it will be because we seek after the Lord; in other words, seek after that good influence He sends abroad: there is no other way to pursue in order to be influenced for right. The moment we reject that power and influence we are on the other side and listening to the evil one, who is seeking to destroy the souls of the children of men. Therefore, faith is necessary for our salvation. Faith is necessary for the cleansing of mankind from sin. There would be no motive power, nothing to impel us to righteousness, without faith in God. There would be nothing to cause us to fight the evil, if it were not for faith in God. That very faith will lead us to turn from evil. If we have faith in Him, we must believe that He is good; and if we would please Him and cleanse ourselves, we also must be good. And that implies an abandoning, a forsaking, a turning away from sin.

Repentance is a law that has been revealed for the salvation of mankind, and without that there is no salvation. No man can be cleansed from sin unless he repents and turns from sin. That is a self evident truth. It is also true that in order to be truly clean we must atone in some way or make good for the past. And what can mankind do for that? Here we stand in the position of utter helplessness. What man can forgive himself? What man can obtain salvation or be cleansed from sin, if perchance he has been guilty all his life of that which is sinful in the sight of God? Man is totally helpless. And we ought to conceive the fact that forgiveness is essential to our sal-

vation, yet man in and of himself cannot obtain that forgiveness. We may repent of our evil ways and turn unto the Lord; we may have faith in Him; but there still remains something that we are powerless to overcome—the responsibility for the evil that we have done. This can only come by that power from on high. Some people have thought there was a conflict between the Apostle James and the Apostle Paul, but I do not regard it as any conflict. James said that faith without works was dead, while Paul wrote that by grace we are saved, and that not of ourselves, not of works, lest any man should boast. My brethren and sisters, the grace of God is necessary for your salvation and for the cleansing from sin which we all need. He so loved the world that He sent His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And forgiveness can come from Him, and from Him alone. Although He introduced an ordinance in His Church whereby we may obtain forgiveness, the main thing is that Jesus came and His blood was spilt that we might be forgiven of our transgressions, and thereby be cleansed. We are told that if we walk in the light as He is in the light, then shall we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse us from all sin. Without that there would be no cleansing. And the way that can be done must be by our Father in heaven, through His divine authority. It can only be accomplished by Him personally ministering unto us, or by some of His constituted authority upon the earth, having the right to officiate in His name, and thereby bring unto us remission of sins so that we may be cleansed every whit, and that our bodies may be made fit for the reception of the Holy Ghost, to be conferred by that same authority, through the laying on of hands.

That, my brethren and sisters, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I pray that we may all appreciate it and live in

accordance with its principles, through
Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the
hymn commencing,

Guide us, O thou great Jehovah,
Saints unto the promised land;

We are weak, but thou art able,
Hold us with thy prowerful hand.

Benediction was pronounced by El-
der Andrew Jenson, and conference
was adjourned to Saturday morning
at 10 o'clock.