

GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

FIRST DAY.

The Seventy-Eighth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. on Friday, October 4th, 1907, President Joseph F. Smith presiding.

AUTHORITIES PRESENT.

There were present of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund; of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, Heber J. Grant, Rudger Clawson, Hyrum M. Smith, George Albert Smith, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney and David O. McKay; Presiding Patriarch, John Smith; of the First Council of Seventies, Seymour B. Young, Brigham H. Roberts, George Reynolds, J. Golden Kimball, Rulon S. Wells, Joseph W. McMurrin and Charles H. Hart; of the Presiding Bishopric, William B. Preston and Orrin P. Miller; Assistant Historian, Andrew Jenson. There were also a large number of presidents of stakes and missions, with their Counselors, Bishops of Wards, Patriarchs, and numerous other

prominent men and women representing various organizations of the Church.

President Joseph F. Smith called the assembly to order, and the services were commenced by the choir and congregation singing the hymn:

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 Wm. T. Jack.

The choir sang the hymn beginning:

Softly beams the sacred dawning
Of the great Millennial morn,
And to Saints gives welcome warning
That the day is hasting on.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

OPENING ADDRESS.

Gratifying unity of the Priesthood and members of the Church.—The cause of the Lord should be paramount.—Individual effort and righteousness essential to salvation.—Assurance of eternal felicity imparted by the Gospel.—Admonition to faithfulness and

purity of life.—Shun association with wicked enemies, but seek their salvation.—The dead, as well as the living, must repent.

I feel very thankful to see so many of the Latter-day Saints assembled as are here this morning at the opening session of our Seventy-eighth Semi-Annual Conference. I desire to express the feelings of welcome we have to all of you who have come together for the purpose of participating in the business that may be transacted at this conference, and for the purpose of listening to such instructions as may be given to us through the servants of the Lord. It is a source of great satisfaction to me to witness the interest that is manifested in this conference by our people. We welcome you here this morning, and feel to invoke upon you the blessing of the Lord; that His Holy Spirit may rest upon all who are assembled here for the purpose of worshiping the Lord in spirit and in truth, and who have come with a desire and purpose in their hearts to fulfill their duty to the Church and to the Lord, who has made it, by His word, necessary for us to assemble together, from time to time, to talk over and to consider His work, and the business that pertains to the upbuilding of Zion and the spread of the Gospel to the nations of the world.

I feel thankful that the Presidency are in the enjoyment of usual health and strength, and that we are united in our labors. I am also very thankful to say to you that the Apostles are also united, not only among themselves, but with the Presidency; and our interest in the work of the Lord is increasing, I believe, day by day. I may say with all truth, that the First Coun-

cil of Seventies are united with us, and also united with each other; and, so far as I know, (and I think that we have very good opportunity to judge), there is a spirit of union and love existing throughout all the Church, pervading all the people of God. And this is undoubtedly a source of pleasure and of strength, a source of joy and satisfaction to every soul who has an interest in the work of the Lord.

Our duties in the Church should be, I think, paramount to every other interest in the world. It is true that we are under the necessity of looking after our worldly interests. It is, of course, necessary for us to labor with our hands, and our minds, in our various occupations for obtaining the necessities of life. It is essential that the Latter-day Saints should be industrious and persevering in all the labors that devolve upon them, for it is written that "the inhabitants of Zion 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 it is written: "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." Again: "Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer." But in all our labors in life, in all the cares that beset us, and the temporal responsibilities that rest upon us, we should put uppermost in our thoughts, and highest in our appreciation and love the Cause of Zion, which is indeed the Cause of truth and righteousness. It is the plan of life that the Almighty has restored to man in the latter days for the salvation

of the souls of men, not only in the world to come, but in our present life, for the Lord has instituted His work that His people may enjoy the blessings of this life to the utmost; that they should be saved in this present life as well as in the life to come, that they should lay the foundation here for immunity from sin and all its effects, and consequences, that they may obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of God beyond this vale of tears. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and it is absolutely necessary for every man and woman in the Church of Christ to work righteousness, to observe the laws of God, and keep the commandments that He has given, in order that they may avail themselves of the power of God unto salvation in this life.

I do not believe in the ideas that we hear sometimes advanced in the world, that it matters but little what men do in this time, if they will but confess Christ at the end of their journey in life, that that is all-sufficient, and that by so doing they will receive their passport into heaven. I denounce this doctrine. It is unscriptural, it is unreasonable, it is untrue, and it will not avail any man, no matter by whom this idea may be advocated; it will prove an utter failure unto men. As reasonable beings, as men and women of intelligence, we cannot help but admire and honor the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is the doctrine of God, and which requires of every man and woman righteousness in their lives, purity in their thoughts, uprightness in their daily walk and conversation, devotion to the Lord, love of truth, love of their fellow-man, and above all things in the world the love of

God. These were the precepts that were inculcated by the Son of God when He walked among His brethren in the meridian of time. He taught these precepts; He exemplified them in His life, and advocated continually the *doing* of the will of Him that sent Him.

He that sent His only-begotten Son into the world to accomplish the mission which He did, also sent every soul within the sound of my voice, and indeed every man and woman in the world to accomplish a mission, and that mission cannot be accomplished by neglect; nor by indifference; nor can it be accomplished in ignorance. We must learn our duty; learn the requirements that the Lord has made at our hands, and understand the responsibilities that He has placed upon us. We should learn the obligation that we are under to God, and to each other, and that we are under also to the cause of Zion, that has been restored to the earth in the latter days. These things are essential, and we cannot prosper in spiritual things, we cannot grow in knowledge and understanding; our minds cannot expand in the knowledge of God, nor in wisdom, nor in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, without we devote our thoughts and our efforts toward our own betterment, toward the increase of our own wisdom, and knowledge in the things of God.

We labor day by day for the bread that perishes, and we devote but a few hours, comparatively, in seeking to obtain the bread of life. Our thoughts, in great measure, are placed upon worldly things, the things that perish, and therefore we are prone to neglect the higher duties that devolve upon us as the children of our father, and to for-

get, in some measure, the greater obligations that rest upon us. It is therefore proper, and indeed it becomes the duty of those who are placed upon the towers as watchmen in Zion to exhort the people to diligence, to prayerfulness, to humility, to a love of the truth that has been revealed to them, and to earnest devotion to the work of the Lord, which is intended for their individual salvation, and, so far as they have influence upon others, the salvation of those whom they may have power to influence to move in the right direction; not that I can save any man, nor that any one man can save any other man or fit him for exaltation in the kingdom of God. This is not given to me to do for others, nor is it given to any man to be a Savior in this sense, or in this way, to his fellow man; but man can set an example; man can urge the precepts of the Gospel. Man can proclaim the truth to others, and can point out the way to them in which to walk, and if they will harken to their counsel, listen to their admonitions and be led by them, they themselves will seek the path of life and they will walk in it, and obtain their exaltation for themselves. And thus the work required of us by the Lord is an individual work, it devolves upon each individual alike. No man can be saved in the kingdom of God in sin. No man will ever be forgiven of his sins by the just Judge, except he repents of his sins. No man will ever be freed from the power of death unless he is born again, as the Lord Almighty has decreed, and declared to the world by the mouth of His Son in the meridian of time, and as He has declared it again in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph

Smith. Men can only be saved and exalted in the kingdom of God in righteousness, therefore we must repent of our sins, and walk in the light as Christ is in the light, that His blood may cleanse us from all sins, and that we may have fellowship with God and receive of His glory and exaltation.

Now, it is not my purpose to occupy very much time this morning, but I desire, the Lord giving me His spirit, to declare my faith in the divine mission of the Son of God, who spoke as no man ever spoke; who announced principles and doctrine that no man ever enunciated, and who proclaimed in the clearest possible terms, the plan of life and salvation; and gave His own life and name to the world, as the only means and name under heaven by which man can be saved and exalted in the kingdom of God.

I declare to you in all candor, and in all earnestness of soul, that I believe with all my heart in the divine mission of Joseph Smith the Prophet, that I am convinced in every fiber of my being that God raised him up to restore to the earth the Gospel of Christ, which is indeed the power of God unto salvation. I testify to you that Joseph Smith was instrumental in the hand of the Lord in restoring God's truth to the world, and also the holy Priesthood, which is His authority delegated unto man. I know this is true, and I testify of it to you. To me it is all-in-all; it is my life, it is my light; it is my hope, and my joy; it gives me the only assurance that I have for exaltation, for my resurrection from death, with those whom I have loved and cherished in this life, and with those with whom my lot has been cast in this world—honorable

men, pure, humble men, who were obedient unto God and His commands, who were not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, nor of their convictions or knowledge of the truth of the Gospel; men who were made of the stuff of which martyrs are made, and who were willing at any moment to lay down their lives for Christ's sake, and for the Gospel, if need be, which they had received with the testimony of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. I want to be re-united with these men when I shall have finished my course here. When my mission is done here I hope to go beyond into the spirit world where they dwell, and be re-united with them. It is this Gospel of the Son of God that gives me the hope that I have of this consummation, and of the realization of my desire in this direction. I have staked *all* on this Gospel, and I have not done it in vain. I know in whom I trust. I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand upon the earth in the latter day, and, as Job, has expressed it, "Though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

It is these things that I desire to impress upon the minds of the Latter-day Saints. You have received the truth. No man can prove to the contrary. No man under the heavens *knows* to the contrary. But you do know that you have received the truth, for God has given to you His Spirit, the Holy Ghost, by whom the things of the Father are revealed unto the understanding of the children of light, and they know in whom they trust. You have received the Gospel of Christ. Live it. Be faithful to it. Honor the covenants that you have made with the Lord in the waters of baptism.

Honor every obligation that you owe to God and to your fellow man. Live so that you can be indeed saviors upon Mount Zion in the sense that your lives will be above reproach, in the sense that no man can justly point to you as transgressors of the law of God, though they may malign you; though they may say all manner of evil against you falsely. Live so that they cannot justly and truly point out in you corruption, wickedness, or misconduct. Let your light so shine that honest men will see your good works and will be led to glorify your Father who is in heaven. Keep away from the haunts of sin. While you may entertain in your hearts a feeling of love, of charity; a merciful feeling toward sinners, those that transgress the laws of God you do not have to take them into your bosoms, nor condescend to their conduct and habits.

I feel in my heart to forgive all men in the broad sense that God requires of me to forgive all men, and I desire to love my neighbor as myself; and to this extent I bear no malice toward any of the children of my Father. But there are enemies to the work of the Lord, as there were enemies to the Son of God. There are those who speak only evil of the Latter-day Saints. There are those—and they abound largely in our midst, who will shut their eyes to every virtue and to every good thing connected with this latter-day work, and will pour out floods of falsehood and misrepresentation against the people of God. I forgive them for this. I leave them in the hand of the just Judge. Let Him deal with them as seemeth Him good, but they are not and cannot become my bosom com-

panions. I cannot condescend to that. While I would not harm a hair of their head, while I would not throw a straw in their path, to hinder them from turning from the error of their way to the light of truth; I would as soon think of taking a centipede or a scorpion or any poisonous reptile and putting it into my bosom, as I would think of becoming a companion or an associate of such a man.

These are my sentiments, and I believe that they are correct. If you can throw yourself in the way of the sinner to stop him in his downward course, and become an instrument in the hand of the Lord of turning him from the way of vice, iniquity, or crime, into the way of righteousness and uprightness, you are justified and that is demanded of you. You should do this. If you can save a sinner from his wickedness, turn the wicked from the course of death that he is pursuing, to the way of life and salvation, you will save a soul from death, and you will have been an instrument in the hand of the Lord of turning the sinner unto righteousness, for which you will receive your reward. Some of our good Latter-day Saints have become so exceedingly good(?) that they cannot tell the difference between a Saint of God, an honest man, and a son of Beelzebub, who has yielded himself absolutely to sin and wickedness. And they call that liberality, broadness of mind, exceeding love. I do not want to become so blinded with love for my enemies that I cannot discern between light and darkness, between truth and error, between good and evil; but I hope to live so that I shall have sufficient light in me to discern between error and

truth, and to cast my lot on the side of truth and not on the side of error and darkness. The Lord bless the Latter-day Saints. If I am too narrow with reference to these matters I hope that the wisdom of my brethren and the Spirit of Light from the Lord may broaden my soul.

We have a few people amongst us who are so wrapped up in and so devoted to some of their kindred who have been guilty of every species of abomination and wickedness in the world, that, the moment they are dead they will come and ask for permission to go into the house of God to perform the ordinances of the Gospel for their redemption. I do not blame them for their affection for their dead, nor do I blame them for the desire in their heart to do something for their salvation, but I do not admire their wisdom, nor can I agree with their conception of right and justice. You cannot take a murderer, a suicide, an adulterer, a liar, or one who was or is thoroughly abominable in his life here, and simply by the performance of an ordinance of the Gospel, cleanse him from sin and usher him into the presence of God. God has not instituted a plan of that kind, and it cannot be done. He has said you shall repent of your sins. The wicked will have to repent of their wickedness. Those who die without the knowledge of the Gospel will have to come to the knowledge of it, and those who sin against light will have to pay the uttermost farthing for their transgression and their departure from the Gospel, before they can ever get back to it. Do not forget that. Do not forget it, you Elders in Israel, nor you, mothers

in Israel, either, and, when you seek to save either the living or the dead, bear it in mind that you can only do it on the principle of their repentance, and acceptance of the plan of life. That is the only way in which you can succeed.

The Lord bless you. Peace be unto the House of Israel. Never mind what the world says, nor what the world does against you. Let us serve God, do our duty, live our religion, keep the commandments of the Lord, and work out our salvation in time and throughout eternity. This is my admonition to the Latter-day Saints, and I pray God that we may all be able to do it, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang the anthem,

“Lift up the voice in singing.”

PRESIDENT JOHN R. WINDER.

Unity of the First Presidency and Apostles.—Progress of the Lord’s work in the world, and in His temples.—Discretion to be observed in work for the Dead.—Gratitude for lengthy life and God’s favor.

You cannot imagine, my brethren and sisters, how grateful I feel this morning to have one more privilege of meeting with you in general conference. I was very much delighted in listening to the remarks we have heard from our President, and I wish to testify, before you, to the truth of the same. President Smith has spoken of the unity of the First Presidency and the Apostles; I testify to that also. We are united, and work together harmoniously in all matters pertaining to the interest and welfare of the Church of Christ on the earth.

I appreciate the privilege of

standing before you a few moments, and express my thanks and gratitude to God my eternal Father that He has lengthened out my days, that I am permitted to see this beautiful morning, and address this grand assemblage of Latter-day Saints.

My desire and intention is to sustain and uphold my President in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church upon the earth.

I feel very thankful, my brethren and sisters, for the gratifying reports that come to us concerning the progress of the work of the Lord throughout the world, where our missionaries are laboring. While the work is prospering in the world, I am very thankful to be able to say that the work of the Lord is also increasing and multiplying in His holy temples. This is a duty that is laid upon the Saints; the Lord requires that they shall minister in behalf of the dead, and it is astonishing sometimes to see the interest that is taken in regard to this matter. Our temples are frequently filled to overflowing, and this is a source of great pleasure to us.

President Smith made a remark in relation to those who seek permission to do work for the dead who were unworthy. Such cases have arisen, and I have marveled that brethren and sisters do not exhibit better judgment—if I may be allowed to use that expression—than to seek the privileges of the house of the Lord for those who are not worthy. I have no doubt they feel anxious and desirous to do all they can for the salvation of their relatives; but they should exercise wisdom in regard to these matters.

I hope, my brethren and sisters,