

GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

FIRST DAY.

The Eighty-First 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 Thursday, Oct. 6, President Joseph F. Smith presiding.

AUTHORITIES PRESENT.

There were present of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund and John Henry Smith; of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, Francis M. Lyman, Heber J. Grant, Reed Smoot, Hyrum M. Smith, Charles W. Penrose, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, David O. McKay, Anthony W. Ivins and Joseph F. Smith, Jr.; Presiding Patriarch John Smith; of the First Council of Seventies, Seymour B. Young, Brigham H. Roberts, J. Golden Kimball, Rulon S. Wells, Joseph W. McMurrin and Charles H. Hart; of the Presiding Bishopric, Charles W. Nibley, Orrin P. Miller and David A. Smith. 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 quor-

ums and organizations of the Church.

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

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor
fear,

But with joy wend your way;
Though hard to you this journey may
appear,

Grace shall be as your day.

Prayer was offered by Elder Melvin J. Ballard.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,
To guide us in these latter days;
We thank Thee for sending the Gospel
To lighten our minds with its rays.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

OPENING ADDRESS.

Increased love for the Gospel a result of increased knowledge.—True to all pledges and assumed obligations to God, His Church and people, and to the world.—Professed members of the Church must stop traducing.—Admonition to the Saints to be faithful to covenants.—Study of Gospel principles adds to faith.—The Saints have nu-

merous testimonies, additional to other Christians, concerning the Messiah.—Strong personal testimony of the divinity of Joseph Smith's appointment to restore the Gospel and reveal doctrines of salvation.

I feel very grateful for the privilege of being present with you this morning, at the opening of our eighty-first anniversary of the semi-annual conference of the Church. I am pleased to see so many present, and my heart is full of blessing for the Latter-day Saints and, indeed, for all the honest in heart throughout the world. I earnestly desire that the Spirit of the Lord may visit us and abide with us throughout all the sessions of this conference, that those who administer and those who are administered unto may rejoice exceedingly in the presence of the Holy Spirit upon them and in their hearts, inspiring them to diligence and faithfulness in the great work of God in which we are engaged.

I do not feel that I should occupy very much time this morning. I have just got out of my bed, where I have lain for more than a month, with very little exercise, and I feel the effects of the inertia, the inactivity to which I have been subjected—not willingly but unwillingly—for the last thirty days or more. Nevertheless, I feel in my heart to say to this congregation that I love the gospel, I love the truth that has been revealed anew to the children of men in these latter days, more, if possible, today than ever I did in my life. I believe in it just as truly and as firmly today as I ever did, and, if possible, more so; and I think it is possible, for the reason that I believe all true Latter-day Saints are growing. They are progressing, they are absorbing more light, more intelligence, stronger

convictions of the truth, day by day; for we cannot help doing this, if we enjoy the spirit of the gospel as we should.

I feel happy, this morning, in having the privilege to say to you that in the days of my childhood and early youth, I made a pledge with God and with His people that I would be true to them. In looking over the experiences of my life, I cannot now discern and do not remember a circumstance, since the beginning of my experience in the world, where I have felt, for a moment, to slacken or relax in the pledge and promise that I made to God and to the Latter-day Saints, or to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in my youth. And if there is a man, or a woman, in the world that can point out to me an instance, in all my life, where I have been untrue to my pledge, or promise, or covenant, I shall be glad to receive that information from that man or woman. As an elder in Israel I tried to be true to that calling; I tried to my utmost to honor and magnify that calling. When I became a seventy, I felt in my heart to be true to that calling, and I strove, with all the intelligence and fervor of my soul, to be true to it. I have no knowledge nor recollection of any act of mine, or any circumstance in my life where I proved untrue or unfaithful to these callings in the priesthood of the Son of God. Later in my life, when I was called to act as an apostle, and was ordained an apostle, and set apart to be one of the Twelve, I strove to honor that calling, to be true to it, and to my brethren, to the household of faith, and to the covenants and obligations involved in receiving this holy priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God.

I am not aware that I ever violated one of my obligations or pledges in these callings to which I have been called. I have sought to be true and faithful to all these things. I have endeavored to be true to my family; and if, ever, I have violated one pledge or promise, or neglected one obligation that rests upon me in these relationships, I do not know it. And when I have made pledges to the people of God, or to the world, if ever I have violated those pledges I do not know it. Furthermore, I do not believe there is a man living that does know it, or that can truthfully testify that I ever did violate those pledges.

I stand before you today, my brethren, sisters and friends, on the ground that I have tried to be true to God, to the utmost of my knowledge and ability; that I have tried to be true to my people, to the utmost of my knowledge and ability; and I have been true to the world in every pledge and promise that I have made to the world, notwithstanding there have been men who have shown a disposition to make it appear that I was a hypocrite, that I was two-faced: that I was one thing to the world and another thing in secret. I want it distinctly understood that those who have conveyed such an idea as this to mankind have been wilfully injuring me, wronging me, and falsifying me and my character before the people; and I want it distinctly understood those things must stop. They must stop at least among men that profess to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I can endure to be maligned and persecuted by my enemies, who are also enemies of the Kingdom of God, but I do not want to be maligned and belied by men who profess to be

members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, neither intentionally or otherwise. Now, I trust that you understand clearly what I mean. I do not know how I can make it much plainer or clearer, with the knowledge that I have of language. Then, I repeat, as the Lord has helped me in the past to be true to my covenants, that I have entered into with Him and with you, with my brethren and with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, so by His help and by His blessing I propose to be true throughout the future of my life, whether I am permitted to live long or short; it matters not to me. While I live, I hope to be a true man, an honest man, a man who can face all mankind and, at last, who can stand before God, the Judge of the quick and the dead, and not quail for what I have done in the world.

May God bless you. May peace abide with you, my brethren and sisters. I pray you to be true to your covenants; be true to those covenants that you made in the waters of baptism, to those covenants you made in the house of the Lord, and true to every righteous obligation that devolves upon you. To be Latter-day Saints, men or women must be thinkers, and workers; they must be men and women who weigh matters in their minds, men and women who consider carefully their course of life and the principles that they have espoused. Men cannot be faithful Latter-day Saints unless they study and understand, to some extent at least, the principles of the gospel that they have received. When you hear of people, that profess to be Latter-day Saints, running off on tangents, on foolish notions and one-horse, cranky ideas,

things that are obviously opposed to reason, and to good sense, opposed to principles of righteousness and to the word of the Lord, that has been revealed to men, you should know at once that they have not studied the principles of the gospel, and do not know very much about the gospel. When people understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, you will see them walking straight-forward, according to the word of the Lord, and the law of God, strictly in accordance with that which is consistent, just, righteous, and in every sense acceptable to the Lord, who only accepts of that which is right and pleasing in His sight; for only that which is right is pleasing unto Him.

I have not time, neither have I strength, this morning, to enter into details or to undertake to preach a lengthy discourse. I do not feel able to do it, physically. The spirit is willing, but just now the flesh is not very strong; but I want to bear my testimony to you Latter-day Saints. I know that my Redeemer lives. We have all the testimony and all the evidence of this great and glorious truth, that the world has, that is, all that the so-called Christian world possesses; and, in addition to all that they have, we have the testimony of the inhabitants of this western continent, to whom the Savior appeared, and delivered His gospel, the same as He delivered it to the Jews. In addition to all this new testimony and the testimony of the holy scriptures from the Jews, we have the testimony of the modern Prophet, Joseph Smith, who saw the Father and the Son, and who has borne record of them to the world; whose testimony was sealed with his blood, and is in force upon the world to-

day. We have the testimony of others who witnessed the presence of the Son of God, in the Kirtland temple, when He appeared to them there, and the testimony of Joseph and Sidney Rigdon, who declared that they were the last witnesses of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I say again, I know that my Redeemer lives; for in the mouths of these witnesses this truth has been established in my mind.

Beside these testimonies, I have received the witness of the Spirit of God in my own heart, which exceeds all other evidences, for it bears record to me, to my very soul, of the existence of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I know that He lives, and that in the last day He shall stand upon the earth, and that He shall come to the people who shall be prepared for Him, as a bride is prepared for the bridegroom, when He shall come. I believe in the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and I have every evidence that I need—at least enough to convince me of the divinity of his mission.

I am proud to say that I have accepted and have tried to keep and honor every word that has proceeded from the mouth of God through him. As—"It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No one will dare to accuse me of side-tracking from, or of refusing to obey any doctrine taught by or revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

I bear my testimony to you and to the world, that Joseph Smith was raised up by the power of God to lay the foundations of this great Latter-day work, to reveal the fullness of the gospel to the world in this dispensation, to restore the

priesthood of God to the world, by which men may act in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and it will be accepted of God; it will be by His authority. I bear my testimony to it; I know that it is true.

I bear my testimony to the divine authority of those who have succeeded the Prophet Joseph Smith in the presidency of this Church. They were men of God. I knew them; I was intimately associated with them; and as one man may know another, through the intimate knowledge that he possesses of him, so I can bear testimony to the integrity, to the honor, to the purity of life, to the intelligence, and to the divinity of the mission and calling of Brigham, of John, of Wilford, and of Lorenzo. They were inspired of God to fill the mission to which they were called, and I know it. I thank God for that testimony and for the spirit that prompts me and impels me towards these men, toward their mission, toward this people, toward my God and my Redeemer. I thank the Lord for it, and I pray earnestly that it may never depart from me—worlds without end.

God bless you, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A contralto solo, "Fear Not," was sung by Sister Mabel Cooper.

PRESIDENT ANTHON H. LUND.

The way to regain our Heavenly Father's presence has been made known.—Interest in Temple work greatly increased.—Recent persecution of missionaries in Germany seems to have resulted beneficially.—Gratifying progress in all the European countries, in spite of obstacles.—Children should be taught practical religion.—Attend-

ance at Sacrament meetings an important duty.

I am very happy, this morning, to be present at this conference and to see so many of the saints who have assembled here at this first meeting. I rejoice that we have had the pleasure of listening to our president, that his health has permitted him to leave his room and to come here and bear such a powerful testimony unto us. I know that you, with me, are happy to see him and to listen to him, and our prayers are that President Smith may regain his wonted health, and be released from all pain of the kind he has suffered so long.

I was pleased to listen to the beautiful song that has just been rendered, and my thoughts were drawn to that happy period concerning which our sister sang, the time when sorrow and crying shall not be found, and death be no more; and then to be in the presence of our heavenly Father. What a beautiful hope we have; and we have learned the way to realize it. Jesus is the way; He taught us how to regain our Father's presence; He atoned for our sins and made us one with the Father again. Now, if we desire to have a share in that happy condition of which our sister sang, we must follow the example He has given us. We must study the way and walk therein; we must study our duties and perform them, and not shrink from them, nor neglect them.

I believe that during the last six months there has been great progress in the Church, and that the saints are drawing nearer unto God, and are trying to perform their duties better than before. When I look upon the eagerness with which the saints flock to the temples, I