

the reason. That is true of the doctrines given us in this book that came to us in such a marvelous manner, the Book of Mormon. The principles announced there are reasonable, and are based on reason, and the same is true in reference to the glorious doctrines contained in that other product of nineteenth century inspiration, the Doctrine and Covenants. I do not feel to enter upon a discussion of that field, of the beauties of the principles contained and announced in those books, of the way in which they are supported by the writings of the philosophers, nor of the way in which they appeal to our reason.

May the Lord bless us, my brethren and sisters, and enable us to realize, deep down in our heart of hearts, the truths of Mormonism, its divine founding, that it is God's work, that He has guided it in the past and will continue to guide it in the future. May we be faithful and true to the trusts reposed in us, and do our part in helping to establish this great work in the earth, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

### ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

(Of First Council of Seventy.)

I attended a fast meeting last Sunday afternoon, my brethren and sisters, and immediately after the bishop of the ward had made the announcement that the time would be given to the people of the ward, one of the sisters instantly arose to her feet. She made the statement that she had frequently sat through the entire time of a testimony meeting, in uneasiness and anxiety, with the feeling that she ought to bear

her testimony, but frequently she had sat and listened and suffered until the opportunity had passed by. The sister to whom I refer expressed the feeling that by taking advantage of the opportunity of speaking at the very commencement she would be able to sit in peace, and enjoy the balance of the meeting. My brethren and sisters, it was very much of a surprise to me to be called upon to address this great gathering this afternoon. I have the satisfaction, however, of feeling somewhat as the sister I have referred to; that is, that through my turn to speak coming so early in the services, I will be able to enjoy more completely all the balance of the meetings, as there will be no reason for me having any further feeling of anxiety as to the part I am to play in the conference. I frequently have a very great deal of anxiety in regard to this responsibility, and often hear other brethren express similar thoughts relative to this duty. Yesterday I heard a prominent brother say he would prefer going anywhere, to any of the stake conferences, even where long, hard journeys had to be made rather than stand up in this great building, in a general conference, and undertake to instruct the people.

When a man occupies this position, he certainly feels that he is dependent upon the help and inspiration of the Lord, it is out of the question for any man, of his own ability, to speak words that will be for the encouragement and the edification of the great number who gather together upon these occasions. Men also know, notwithstanding their weaknesses, that by the blessing, and help, and inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord, they

frequently discharge the duty of speaking publicly to the satisfaction and blessing of those who come under the sound of their voices. I trust that as we have been blest in the teachings that have already been delivered in our hearing, that we shall continue to have the blessings of the Lord in all that may be said to us in the balance of our conference meetings.

I rejoice very greatly in the fervent testimonies that were borne this morning by the president of the Church and his counselors. We all have reason to feel encouraged, when we discover that the presiding authority, the men upon whom the very greatest responsibility rests, have a perfect assurance that the work to which we have set our hands, as a people, is the work of the living God, that it has not been established by the will or wisdom of mortal man, but that it has come into existence by the decree of our Father in heaven. Assurances, through the gift, and power, and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have come into their souls concerning the truth of Mormonism. I suppose that in the heart of each of you who heard these testimonies, this morning, there was a feeling that a like testimony and revelation concerning the truth had been given to you. I am very happy in my feelings, my brethren and sisters, because of this same knowledge, a knowledge that has been given by the power of God. This understanding can not come by the teaching of parents, or bishops, or other authorities alone, although all such precious teachings may have tended to help bring many of us to an understanding of the truth. When one has a convincing testimony of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ,

it comes by the power of God, and not by the teachings of men, however precious those teachings may have been.

We heard a little, this morning, from President Lund, in relation to the work of some of the auxiliary organizations in the Church, and we all know, as members of the church, that very great attention has always been given to the education of the young people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is common to hear from those who are not of us, and sometimes, to hear from sources that should and do know better, that we are a people who love ignorance. Our enemies say that the leaders of the Church do not desire the young people to be educated in common with the young people of the nation. The story of Mormonism, in relation to education, when it is written, will be a very wonderful story, for the story of Mormonism is a story of education. It commenced in the very beginning, with an education of the highest character. God, our Father in heaven, chose from among the great hosts of men who were upon the earth, a simple youth to introduce the great work of the latter days. In order that he might be qualified for the accomplishment of this great responsibility, he was taken through a course of training and education by heavenly beings, and he was trained also by the revelations of the Lord, God of Heaven to him. By the intelligence that was thus communicated to him by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the very commencement, he was made to comprehend and understand that the glory of God is intelligence and that "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance." That has been

the story of Mormonism, from the days of Joseph Smith up to the present time.

I doubt whether any other people can be found, upon the face of the whole earth, who in addition to paying their taxes, in common with the rest of the citizens, do as much per capita as the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the education of the youth of the people. I am of the opinion that there is more given, from the tithings of the people, for the education of the rising generation than is given to any other one item in the development of the work of the Church. My understanding is that hundreds of thousands of dollars are contributed annually, by the Trustee-in-Trust, to keep up the great Church school system that has been inaugurated throughout the various stakes in Zion. There are a great number of schools that have been planted, by the direction of the presiding authorities. Splendid buildings have been erected by the free will offerings of the people and by the assistance of the Church funds. Hundreds of thousands of dollars—possibly it may run into a million or more—have been given by the people for the erection of buildings wherein their children can be instructed in the wisdom and learning of the world and where they can be instructed also, in the learning that pertains to the kingdom of God.

In traveling among the people, in visiting the various stake conferences, it has been my privilege, frequently, to meet with the young people who are studying in these various Church academies. I have been very greatly impressed with the evidences of the spirit of inspiration, the spirit of the Lord

that is manifest in the students and in the men and women who are engaged in this work, in our various Church schools. I am glad that the people appreciate, to a very great extent, the wonderful advantages that are given wherever church schools have been established, and that as a general thing these schools are well attended. They ought to be attended to their fullest capacity. It ought to be the cry of every one of these organizations that they are crowded to the very doors. This would be the condition if the people, the fathers and the mothers of the young folks, properly appreciated the great blessings that come to the youth of Israel in being trained in the things of God. While the children obtain this precious religious instruction in the Church schools they obtain every other educational advantage that can be had in any of the high schools of the state. We should not forget that this religious education is desirable and profitable above all other education. It is a serious thing, indeed, to have an education in the secular things of the world, and be ignorant concerning the will of God our Creator, and feel that we do not owe any allegiance to the Father that has created us, and has planted within us the wonderful power and intelligence that has so distinguished the human family. I say to all the fathers, and to all the mothers in Israel, take advantage of the Church school system, that has been established, that your sons and daughters may be educated to believe in the precious things that have been revealed. In these schools your children are under gospel influences not alone for the half hour or more that may be given to special religious instruction, but they are

under the spirit and inspiration of the Lord, in these blessed institutions, from the moment they enter the building in the morning until they leave in the afternoon. Hard indeed will be the heart of the boy or girl who can be brought under such influences, day after day, and not have their hearts touched and be eventually brought to believe in the doctrines of the Church, as they have been revealed in the age in which we are living.

In connection with this subject, there has been anxiety on the part of the presiding authorities to know how all the hosts of children within the borders of Zion might be benefited by this system of education. You know when we hear the statistics of the Sunday School organizations, we discover that there are over 100,000 children, enrolled in the Sunday Schools of the Church, but there are only about ten thousand of this hundred thousand or more that have the advantages that are to be obtained in Church schools. There has been and is now, anxiety on the part of the presiding authorities to know how the other ninety thousand might be benefited. As a result of that anxiety and of their prayers to our Father in heaven, the inspiration of the Lord of heaven came upon His servants, and they were directed to introduce into the Church what is known as the Religion Class organization. The very purpose and object of the Religion Class organization is to bring to every town and to every hamlet throughout the entire Church the advantages and benefits that it has been demonstrated flow so abundantly from the religious instructions that are imparted in our Church schools. Yet, we occasionally learn, in listening to reports that are made

in the various stakes, that there are men, sometimes those who occupy positions of honor in the midst of the people, who do not seem to give that hearty welcome and that whole-souled support to this organization to which it is entitled.

It ought to be known to all the people that the Religion Class organization has come into existence in a legitimate manner. It has had birth under the direction of the presiding authorities of the Church, the Presidency and the Twelve, and in our general conference, year after year, if you will take note, we lift up our hands supporting the general authorities of the Religion Class organization, President Anthon H. Lund standing as the general superintendent, with Elder Rudger Clawson and Elder Hyrum M. Smith of the council of the twelve, as his assistants. We thus give evidence, by our vote in general conference, that we recognize the worth of this organization, and that it has a place and a right in the midst of the people. It ought to be known to every president, and to every bishop, in Zion, to every father and mother, and to every man and woman who labors for the upbuilding of Zion, that there cannot be a properly and fully organized ward in any of the stakes of Zion where there is not a Religion Class organization. It has come by divine appointment. It is for the blessing and preservation and education of the youth of the Latter-day Saints. The ideal to which the general board, and the authorities in the Religion Classes are laboring, is to bring to the children instruction in religion every day that they attend the public schools. It is not their desire to bring this religious instruction into the school, or in

any way interfere with the rights and privileges of children of parents who are not of us—for every church organization should have the liberty to teach to the children belonging to parents of such organization, those principles that they believe necessary to their proper education in religious and moral truth. And that is our right, no matter who may oppose it. It is not only our right, but it is a responsibility that rests upon us as men exercising authority, to take advantage of the opportunities that abound, and bring to the children not only one day in the week but two days, or more days, as it may be possible, according to our circumstances, a Religion Class instruction. When our children graduate from the public schools in secular learning they should be ready to graduate also in religious learning. As a result of proper attention to Religion Class work, faith in God would be established in our children, and they would love the truth as it has been revealed, and grow up to manhood and womanhood, honoring God, honoring the authority of His Priesthood, recognizing the fact that there are men called, in the age in which we live, to bear the authority of God.

If our children learn to respect this authority and to have proper reverence for the men who hold the holy priesthood, they will be honorable men and women and will bring joy and peace and happiness to our hearts. When we discover that our sons or daughters think or speak lightly of the authority that God has conferred upon man, we have reason to feel very anxious indeed, for we may know that they are straying away from the light that has been revealed; and that light, as we

have been told, is the power of God unto salvation.

I rejoice in the truth and in the knowledge that has come to my soul concerning this work. It is my testimony, my brethren and sisters, that it has been planted by the living God. It is the work spoken of by the holy prophets. God has remembered the promises made to the prophets, and He has set His hand to accomplish His strange and wonderful work in the midst of the nations. The story of Mormonism, from its inception up to the present moment, proves that the God of heaven has planted it, that the God of heaven has sustained it, and the God of heaven will sustain it, forever and forever. That is His promise and his promises, praise be to His holy name, never fail. God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Brother David Reese sang a tenor solo, entitled, "The Almighty."

### **PRESIDENT SEYMOUR B. YOUNG**

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

My beloved brethren and sisters, this is a very exalted position for me to be placed in, and I consider it a great honor to stand before so large an audience of Latter-day Saints. I hope I shall be able to make you hear, as my voice warms up, and I trust, under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, that I may be inspired to say something that will be of benefit to you and to myself.

I testify to the goodness of our Heavenly Father in thus permitting to be with us the presidency of the Church, and especially our beloved President, Joseph F. Smith. He in-