

PRESIDENT FRANCIS M. LYMAN.

Judgment by principles of Sermon on the Mount.—The people familiar with Church leaders, and know their integrity.—Righteous people are not persecutors.—Prohibition needed to help the weak. Latter-day Saints advocate and practice righteousness.

It is delightful for the Latter-day Saints to meet together to worship the Lord and to consider the blessings He has bestowed upon us, to listen to a recital of some of the advancement that has been made in the Church, and some things in relation to our good record. We compare very favorably with our neighbors and with conditions that exist at the present time, in the world, hence there is no excuse for the agitation that is being provoked by some who feel that it is their duty to arraign the Latter-day Saints before the public opinion of the world.

I was reminded, this morning, in my early waking moments, it being the sixth day of April, the occasion for the general annual gathering of the Saints to transact the business of the Church, and to hear the word of the Lord, I was reminded of the conditions that exist around us, and I thought of the Sermon on the Mount. My mind was turned to it, and I feel that to read just a few verses from that memorable sermon by the Savior will give us an opportunity to consider and to examine ourselves and, possibly, draw the attention of our friends to an examination of their condition as well as ours. I believe you will discover that it is a very fitting text for a little talk, for us to look over the field and regard ourselves, and to remind our friends and neighbors of the opportunity, also, to consider our faith and our standing and fellowship with the Lord. We can

profit much by this, and we may discover, possibly, some reformation that we need to make ourselves, in order to be fully in harmony with the doctrines of the Lord; but I believe that the comparison will be very favorable for the Latter-day Saints. I will just read a few verses, in the fifth chapter of Matthew, commencing with the third verse:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Now, I believe, my brethren and sisters, that the Latter-day Saints have great reason to take courage and feel consoled when we look

over the field and consider what is being said in regard to us, when we consider our own position, how carefully and exactly the Latter-day Saints are attending to their own duties, magnifying the priesthood we bear, devoting ourselves to preaching the gospel throughout the earth, preaching the doctrines of life and salvation, and ministering for the salvation of the children of men.

We work for those who live and also for the dead, thus following in the footsteps of our Lord and Master, for as soon as He had finished His mortal mission here on the earth, before He returned to His Father, before He arose with His body and went to heaven, His first mission and attention was given to those who had died, those who were indifferent and cared not for the truth when it was taught to them in the flesh. He went to the spirits in prison, to preach the gospel and labor for their salvation. He turned the key, opened the door, and established a mission among those who had rejected the gospel—not those, altogether, who had not heard it, but also those who had heard and had rejected it and concluded not to receive it. To such He went and preached the gospel. Now, you know, my brethren and sisters, what our works have been, especially these thousands of men who are present here this afternoon, who hold the priesthood. This congregation is made up, largely, of men bearing the priesthood, men who have been called into the ministry in the world, and they have been preachers of the gospel and defenders of the faith. You know your brethren who preside over you; you know those who have presided over this Church from its in-

ception, eighty-one years ago; you know the history of all the prophets and the apostles of the Latter-day Saints; and when the world, or men in the world take up a mission to war upon the Latter-day Saints, and charge us with insincerity, with immorality, and with any kind of wickedness, you are my witnesses that these statements are untrue. You know, this congregation knows the truth concerning these things; and other people who are here, who are not Latter-day Saints but who live among us, they know also the integrity of our course, and our devotion to the work in which we are engaged for the salvation of the children of men. We are known; our doctrines are known; our principles are known.

I would like you who want to consider this matter, to look over the history of those who are making trouble for the Latter-day Saints, those who have made trouble for us in the past, and those who are thus engaged today. I would like you to weigh and measure them by this standard that the Savior has laid down, and find out whether those trouble-making men are persecuting people, whether they are persecutors or being persecuted. Are the Latter-day Saints persecutors, or are they being persecuted? Are they being betrayed? Are falsehoods being uttered in regard to the Latter-day Saints? Are we being imposed upon, or are we imposing upon the world? My brethren and sisters, are we not laboring for the salvation of the children of men, carrying the same mission of faith to the world that the Savior Himself brought? Are we not teaching the doctrine of repentance, and of baptism, by immersion, for the remission of sins? Are

we not teaching, also, the gift of the Holy Ghost, through the laying on of hands, by men who are authorized of the Lord and commissioned of Him? Are we not thus laboring all the time in the world, carrying the gospel as far as we possibly can, and do we not expect to carry it to every creature; is not that the truth? Are they telling the truth about us when they are publishing, in their magazines, those articles that are being published against us? What kind of men are those who put forth those doctrines and make these efforts against the Latter-day Saints, what is their character and standing? Are they trying to improve the Latter-day Saints? Are they better than the Latter-day Saints in their lives, is their morality superior to ours? Or, are we the people who are being persecuted? Is this not an evidence and a mark that designates the Latter-day Saints as the followers of the Lord Jesus? The very fact that wicked men stand up and undertake to berate and impeach the character of the Latter-day Saints, is it not a positive testimony and evidence that we are the followers of the Lord Jesus?

You know your own people; you are acquainted with them in your own wards; you know them in your own stakes, the Latter-day Saints that are gathered together; and you know the class of men that are being sent out from among you into the world. You know how carefully they are trained, how carefully they are instructed at home and abroad. You know, also, that if any fall into sin, how quickly it is discovered, how soon they are detected, when that occurs, which sometimes does. Men are fallible and liable to fall, but as a rule the

Latter-day Saints are stable. They are superior because of the spirit that is with the work of the Lord, the Holy Ghost that has dwelt with us, that we received at our baptism and confirmation, through our faith and repentance. The Latter-day Saints would not be gathered together without that measure of faith that the Lord has bestowed upon us, which He has been generous enough to bestow upon all people. He would be delighted, as a loving Father, for all His children to receive the same spirit that our elder brother received, the Holy Ghost that was conferred upon Him, and that descended upon Him, succeeding His baptism. Have we not been so laboring, and are we not thus engaged at the present time? All this army of men have labored either at home or abroad. That is the labor which has been required of the Latter-day Saints. We have been trained in morality, in purity, in sobriety, in temperance, in faith, in charity, and in all the gifts and graces of the gospel. That has been the mission and ministry of the Latter-day Saints. That was the mission of the Prophet Joseph, and of his brethren, all who have shared with him in the priesthood that has been restored from heaven.

You know the attitude of the Latter-day Saints toward these principles; and not only do we know, but our neighbors, among whom we live, and those who live in our neighborhood, they know perfectly well that the Latter-day Saints are a good people, an honest people, a conscientious people, and a moral people. We are not encouraging immorality, neither here nor abroad. We do not want immoral men. We have not preached for immorality, nor for immoral people. We have

not advocated the coming of wicked people; we have not desired that any one should come here for wickedness. That is a false accusation, and those who have taken that stand and position against the Latter-day Saints, to try to make trouble for this people—this little handful of people, gathered together here—they are not inspired of the Lord; they are operating against the truth, and they have need of repentance themselves; they have need for reformation. They have been berating better people than they are themselves; that is what they have been doing, and that is what the wicked do. That is what they did in the days of the Savior; they persecuted Him to His death. They will not persecute us any more than they did Him. But they are persecutors; they are not peacemakers; they are not the righteous that are laboring for the salvation of the children of men. It is not their exceeding purity and righteousness that is prompting them, but it is the spirit of evil, the spirit of Satan, and not the Spirit of the Lord.

You will not find good people persecuting bad people. Now, you look for persecutors, look for people right at home that are trespassers and you will find that the righteous are not transgressors. The righteous are not seeking to do injury to the wicked, but it is the wicked that persecute, that speak evil, and that revile their neighbors. We simply endure what is put upon us; and we have this assurance, my brethren and sisters, that this kingdom which the Lord has established is so sustained by the power of God that it will never be overthrown. You may be overthrown, if you do wrong; if we go into transgression and sin, we shall be disturbed and

overthrown; but not so with this work. It is a mark of the Latter-day Saints that they are struggling for righteousness and truth, for justice and for mercy. They love peace and work for it; they are not a warlike people but a peaceable people, a spiritually minded people, a people who love justice, righteousness, and truth. I thought that this doctrine of the Lord upon the Mount was very fitting to our condition at the present time, advising us that if we were persecuted we need not be surprised. Why, the Saints were persecuted in the days of the Savior, and as long as He engaged in His ministrations among the people He was not exempt, although He was the Son of God. We need not worry, if persecutions come upon us. The wicked do not need to be persecuted; the wicked can be handled by the law, and can be dealt with and treated by the law; but if you want to disturb the righteous, the pure, and upright, it must be done by persecution, and not legally or lawfully.

There is no need of troubling about the Latter-day Saints on account of their alleged sins. If we are sinners, we stand in the presence of the law, as we stand in the presence of the Lord, and are answerable—ready to answer for everything that we are guilty of. The Lord will sustain His people. He will sustain us as individuals, men and women, members of His Church. Now, that is right and proper and pleasing in His sight. We ought to appreciate the fact, my brethren and sisters, that the troubles that are arrayed against us in the world only tend to refine us, purify us, and do us good, possibly putting us a little closer on guard in the future, that we may be bet-

ter than we have been. We are not afraid to stand in the presence of the law, as we heard this morning from our president, in regard to conditions that exist among us in regard to marriage, in regard to divorce, and so forth. We can stand to be taken care of, certainly, as well as the people of the earth, for it is discovered that we are fully as good as they are, and, in some things, a little better than the people of the world. We have information, knowledge, truth, and revelation superior to what the people of the world have. The Lord has been generous to us. We have been fortunate enough to come upon the earth at the very time when the gospel has been sent, and are favored with taking part and portion therein. The Lord is pleased with His people, as a whole. There are, no doubt, individuals among us who have not pleased the Lord in all things. We have not always, all of us, done right, but as a people, as Latter-day Saints, the Lord is pleased with His people, for their righteousness, not for their sins; but we are struggling, all the time, to do better. We are struggling to make all the people better. We are endeavoring to gather the good and honest from the world, and to reclaim those who are wayward. I was impressed with the prayer of the president, not only for the leading brethren among the people, and the Latter-day Saints, but those who are wayward as well, those who need the favor and blessing of the Lord particularly, those who have not been so favored in their dispositions, those who have not felt inclined to repent, to reform and work righteousness as they should. The blessings of the Lord were asked upon them. That should always be

so, as it is the sick that need the physician. Let the petitions and faith of the people go out for the advantage and benefit of those who need to be encouraged and strengthened.

I thought the conversation of the president, this morning, was very encouraging for the Latter-day Saints, and he spoke the mind of the Lord, the will of the Lord; and so did President Lund, upon the subject of the Word of Wisdom, and also the subject of temperance. We find ourselves, just now, as he drew our attention to the fact, confronted with this question, and in a little while we are to determine, the Latter-day Saints and our neighbors and friends who live among us, are to determine what shall be done. I am persuaded that our friends, very many of them, I think I would be perfectly safe in saying that the majority of our friends and neighbors who live among us, who are not Latter-day Saints, are in favor of temperance, in favor of good order, in favor of law and of peace. I think we can say that concerning most of the people of our state. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule, but as a rule I believe that our neighbors, as well as the Latter-day Saints will demonstrate, on the 27th day of June, this year, that the people of the State of Utah are in favor of sobriety, of temperance, and of prohibition. I hope so; I hope they will be ready for that. I have been personally under the law of prohibition so long that I want everybody else under it; I have found that it is good, very good indeed. I can commend it to all the people of our state, and I want to sound a note of advice for the people of Utah: Let us be a sober people,

and let us help those who are weak. If we are strong ourselves, and feel that we can get along, that we do not need any law or anything to help us, let us help those who need to be helped; let us strengthen them. If we have been strengthened and converted, and are able to stand fairly well ourselves, let us help our neighbors about us, and let us be Latter-day Saints in very deed. We have made profession to do this. We should keep the commandments of the Lord and refrain from all evil; we should be temperate not only in regard to the use of liquor but in regard to the use of other things that are forbidden in the Word of Wisdom. Let us be Saints, and encourage our neighbors about us to follow our good example. Let them see; let our light so shine before all men, and in their presence, that they will discover our good works. We do not want them to discover in us any bad works, we do not want to engage in any bad works; it is not necessary; and the Lord will not excuse us, not near so readily as He will excuse those who have not been instructed, and who do not know as we know.

We have received of the Spirit of the Lord. Other men have received of other spirits. There is a world of spirits about us and among all peoples. Every denomination and every organization, political or otherwise, have their spirit, the spirit of their organization; and they partake of it, and it seems altogether right to them, I presume; but it takes the Spirit of the Lord, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order for men and women to serve the Lord, to find out, and to know Him. We can't do it without faith, without repentance, without bap-

tism, without the inspiration of the Holy Ghost which we receive by the laying on of hands. These are the initiatory doctrines of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, and they are imperatively necessary. I want to bear my testimony before my brethren and sisters, here today, that these doctrines and principles are indispensable for Latter-day Saints. Other people may not care for them and will not, possibly, until they have some other chance on the other side. They may reject these principles here; they may not see; they do not see; they can not receive the same spirit that we have received except on the same conditions, and that is through the principle of faith. Again, a mere profession of faith is not enough, but it must be a genuine, living faith that will produce repentance and works of righteousness. That is what is necessary.

The Lord has arranged for His people, and He will sustain His people, and the truth concerning this work and the true character of this people will be demonstrated before the world. The world will find out that the Latter-day Saints are a peculiar people; that although there are so many bad things said about us, they will find us a good people. That is what we are laboring for. We are preaching righteousness, advocating the doctrine of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no law against that. Isn't that good doctrine? We also teach repentance. Isn't repentance good doctrine, and is it not effective? You can't save a man without repentance, of course; and a man will not repent who has not faith; it is the principle of faith that will produce repentance. There is no repentance without faith in God, and there is no forgiveness of sins without the

ordinance of baptism; it is important and necessary, and we can't avoid it. We can't relieve ourselves of the sins we have committed, except in the way I have explained. We may cease to sin, and sin no more, if we please, but in order to free ourselves from the sins that we have committed, and to enter into the kingdom of God, as the Son of God did, Himself, we must do it through baptism, genuine baptism, the baptism that the Lord has laid down and so instructed us. It must not be looked upon as unnecessary; it is important; we can't free ourselves from it at all; it is the law.

This is the work that the Latter-day Saints have been engaged in, and they have done a wonderful work in eighty years. It is a remarkable work, and our position is unique and remarkable in the world, among the Christian denominations of the earth. I say it is very remarkable, and what a sensation is made throughout the world today by this good people. It is not for our sins, not because we are wicked. We have not clogged the courts with the necessity of taking care of us for our wickedness. We have not advocated immorality or impurity at all. It has never been countenanced by the Latter-day Saints, and is not today; and whatever of evil there is among our people, and in this state, is not chargeable to the Latter-day Saints; it is properly chargeable to men of corruption, wickedness, and the worst of immorality; that is what it is. It cannot be charged to us; we are not guilty of these things, they have not been established by us. We have not advocated them abroad, or brought them here and established them; not at all; and we are not engaged in any kind of wickedness.

The Latter-day Saints are not doing it. That is my testimony for the Latter-day Saints who are gathered together in Zion, that we are laboring for purity and righteousness and for the salvation of the children of men and our sons and daughters. We rejoice exceedingly at their devotion and faithfulness to the Lord, and our hearts are broken, and sorrowful, and tender, when we find one straying from the path of truth and righteousness.

I pray the Lord to bless you, my brethren and sisters; and I commend to you the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I have read to you. Read them in your own Bibles at home, and see if they are not very fitting for the conditions under which the Latter-day Saints are living at the present time, and the experiences that we are having in connection with the world. May the Lord bless us during our conference, that we may rejoice exceedingly and take home the word of the Lord from His servants, and be better and stronger in the future, and realize that the Lord has established His kingdom and will sustain it and preserve it to the end, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

A duet, entitled "Make the home beautiful," was sung by Sisters Esther Davis and Erma Pendleton.

ELDER HEBER J. GRANT.

Teachings and example of Church leaders invariably for righteousness. —The faithful noted for good works, but renegades become malignant persecutors.—Statistics proving high standard of Latter-day Saints.—The saloon bar: "A bar to heaven, a door to hell."—Plea for health promotion.

I am pleased to again have the opportunity of meeting with the