

them in the kingdom of our Father. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

My brethren and sisters: I suppose a good many of the people who are in this congregation this afternoon are somewhat surprised that members of the First Council of Seventy have been called upon to occupy this position at so early a stage in the proceedings of this conference. I am satisfied the brethren of that Council were sitting in comparative ease in their feelings—with no thought of being called to speak but expecting to hear from other brethren of the Presidency, and of the Council of the Apostles. Elders of the Church are never sure as to who will be called upon, and are supposed to be ready always to give a reason for the hope they have within them. I trust, my brethren and sisters, that I may be able, under the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord, to speak such words as shall in a measure give a reason for the hope that I have, as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I certainly feel that it is a very great privilege and honor, as well as a great responsibility, to have the opportunity of bearing testimony concerning the things of God in a general conference of the Church. There are thousands and tens of thousands of men who by the light of the Holy Spirit have been converted to the doctrines of the gospel. Such men have loved those doctrines with all their strength, and have devoted their time and means for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, have never had an opportunity of this sort.

It has been my privilege, during the months that have passed since our last general conference, to travel quite extensively in the various stakes of Zion. I have appreciated the opportunity of being in the companionship of the members of the Council of the Apostles and in the companionship of the members of the First Council of Seventy in these travels. I feel that I have been very greatly benefited by the counsels of my brethren, and by the example that they have constantly set before me. I have also been benefitted and blessed, in coming in contact with the people, and with the presiding brethren in the various stakes of Zion. My testimony is that there are a host of good and capable men occupying positions of responsibility in the Church of Christ. Whether one goes to the north or to the south, to the east or to the west, he finds men whose hearts are set upon the things of the kingdom of God, and who are bending their energies, and giving the very best there is in them, for the blessing of the people, and for the accomplishment of the work that God has set His hand to perform in this latter dispensation.

It is a very pleasing thing to know that the blessings of the Lord are resting in very rich abundance upon the people in a temporal way. Wherever I have been I have heard expressions of gratitude concerning the blessings that are coming to the people. They seem to be in a most prosperous condition. The earth has been blessed and is yielding of its strength in much abundance, for the sustenance of the people. The parched places, in a manner of speaking, have become in many localities springs of living water. "The desert places have been made

glad," and happy and comfortable homes have been established over a wide extent of country, in fulfillment of the promises that have been made by our Father in heaven. Ancient prophets and prophets, who have lived and spoken in our own times have declared that just such blessings would characterize the latter days. We should all be very grateful that we are privileged to live in an age of inspiration, that under the providences and loving kindness of our Father in heaven, our hearts have been touched by the testimony of the Lord Jesus, and that we have been made, by the power and inspiration of God, to comprehend the truth, and to know that God our Father has indeed spoken, and that He has revealed as of old, that form of doctrine that is able to make us wise unto salvation.

I hope, my brethren and sisters, that we are all anxious to recognize, and honor, and be guided by the inspiration of the Lord. The word and counsel of God will always be made manifest through the channels of the Holy Priesthood, for this is God's way of working among the people. God has raised up a ministry by sending holy beings who in their time as noted men upon the earth had been clothed with His power and authority. These holy angels have by the commandment of God conferred that authority upon men in this dispensation, and once more the Lord reveals His mind and His will to His chosen servants the Prophets, as He has always done, when He has had a ministry among men. The responsibility rests upon this people to hold up the hands of the servants of the Lord. The responsibility rests upon the people also to so

order their lives that they can be in the companionship of the Spirit of the Lord, that they may be able to recognize the voice of the Good Shepherd as it is made manifest through the authority that God has established, that they may not be led away by the voice of strangers, but may be able always to discern the truth and to give their hearts to the truth, and their time and ability for the spreading of that truth among the children of men.

We are under obligation, my brethren and sisters, to make mankind acquainted with the marvelous things that have been revealed in this dispensation. One of the old apostles taught the people in his time that as a result of his calling necessity had been laid upon him, he did not feel that he had anything to glory in of himself as a man, but that very serious obligations had come to him, and that he was under necessity of making known the things of God that had been communicated to him. He declared that woe would be unto him if he did not preach the gospel, and that same manner of obligation and necessity has come to the people of the Latter-day Saints. It was so taught by our Father in heaven to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the beginning. The great responsibility that the people are under is the preaching of the word of the Lord as it had been revealed, the carrying of glad tidings of great joy to the inhabitants of the earth. We have not been given authority simply that we may be honored of men, or that we may be exalted among men. We have been given authority that we may be made the servants of men, that we may be ready and willing to forget self, and to give our time and whatever ability

God may have endowed us with, for the benefit and blessing and salvation of our fellow beings.

I represent, my brethren and sisters, one branch of the great organization of the Church, the Seventies of the Church of Christ. I feel that it is a very great honor indeed to be a representative of this body of men, for they have been spoken of in the revelations of the Lord as the ministry of the Lord, men specially called to be preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I don't know how much time we give as Seventies to a contemplation of the responsibilities that pertain to our calling, as they are outlined in the book of revelations, but if we will take that book and read the word of the Lord we will discover that God has said that our calling is different, in a sense, to the calling of other men who bear the authority of the Holy Priesthood. We are expected to be preachers of the gospel continually; there is no period of time when we can lay off this responsibility. There is no time when we can hold our peace, and when we can refrain from delivering the testimony that has been communicated to us by the power of God. The Lord rather indicates in this revelation, the 124th Section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, that other men may preach the gospel as they may have opportunity, but that this order of the Priesthood are expected to be in readiness at all times, and to be in the exercise of the authority conferred upon them constantly. I don't suppose that we can imagine that the Seventy are to be constantly away from home, or that they are always to be absent from their families. It is a part of the gospel plan that men shall give attention to their families, and shall

provide for them. The gospel teaches that he who will not provide for his family is worse than an infidel, and has already denied the faith, so that we cannot come to the conclusion from the revelation that we are to be constantly away from home in foreign missionary service. It would be much more reasonable to decide that in addition to our missionary work abroad there must also be a missionary work at home. When we return from the missionary field we are not to feel that we can lay off the harness of the Holy Priesthood, or the responsibility that pertains to our calling, and the magnifying of that calling, but we should continue at home, as we may have opportunity, the same line of work to which we have given our attention in the missionary field.

We are very glad to say, as a council, that some of the presidencies in the stakes of Zion have been impressed during recent months, possibly for a little more than a year, with the advisability of exercising this great body of men in the preaching of the gospel here at home. We are very glad that this feeling has come to some of the stake presidents, and that they are planning for the use of this body of men in the preaching of the word of the Lord here at home in the stakes of Zion. There is a very great need for the preaching of the gospel, the first principles of the gospel, those principles that are necessary to the salvation of the human family, right here in our own midst. We have large numbers of young people who, through their own neglect, in a measure, and then it may be possible that through the neglect of others who should teach them, they have not been made as fully acquainted with these important

principles that are so necessary to the salvation of the human family as they ought to be. In my judgment there needs to be in the wards and stakes of Zion much more of the preaching of these doctrines than we have the privilege of listening to as a general thing. We are glad that large numbers of Seventies in one of the Salt Lake City stakes, two hundred of them, were recently called upon to take up a missionary labor, to go among the people who were indifferent, and there was a large number of such people, two or three thousand in one stake,—to labor with them in their homes to see if they could not be aroused to the necessity of doing their duty, the necessity of attending the meetings of the various wards, of partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the necessity of contributing of their means, through their tithings, for the building up of the work of God, the necessity of having prayers in the family, the necessity of having children connected with the Sabbath Schools and with other auxiliary organizations of the Church. These Seventies were not only occupied in the teaching of duty, and the teaching of principles of the gospel, to members of the Church who had grown somewhat indifferent and lukewarm, but they were also called to preach to a large number of people, three or four thousand souls, who were not members of the Church. I fear that we are not magnifying our responsibility as it ought to be magnified in regard to this matter. We go far off, and many men appear to be perfectly willing to go abroad in the nations as representatives of the Church in the preaching of the gospel, but we seem to forget, to a

great extent, the people who are right here—our neighbors who surround us on every hand, who are not of us, who are not interested in our faith, who do not come to our places of worship, and who consequently do not hear anything of the importance of the work planted by the Lord God of heaven through the revelation of His truth in these latter times. I believe these presiding men, stake presidents and bishops, should be very much concerned about these people who have come up from the nations, who have cast their lot with us, yet are not of us, and who do not have understanding concerning our mission and the doctrines of the gospel that have been committed into our hands which we have been commanded to teach to all that live. Therefore I say I feel that it is a good work, indeed, to call upon these Seventies, because of the Lord indicating that they should be engaged in the ministry constantly, that they may be kept in the harness when at home just as they are kept in the harness when abroad. Seventies are not in the missions abroad as much as they ought to be. There is responsibility resting upon the presidents of quorums of Seventy to teach the members of their quorums that they should be anxious to magnify their office and calling, whether it be at home or abroad. They should be taught that it is not proper to seek for excuses when asked to do missionary service, but that men should feel, when they are desired for this service that they are sought after by the Lord of heaven. He it is who wants them to lift up their voices in the nations, and they should feel that it is a high honor indeed and a very great and blessed privilege to cry repent-

ance among the people, and bear testimony to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is no greater truth in this world known to man than the truth that God has revealed. It is at the foundation of the peace and happiness and joy of all mankind in this life, and at the foundation of their eternal salvation and happiness in the life that is to come. Blessed is the man honored of God in holding authority to preach the word of the Lord. Blessed is the man who is clothed upon with the power of the Holy Ghost, and who has been made to know in his own soul that God has spoken, that He has revealed eternal principles that, if accepted, will lead men in the way of salvation. Men should be proud to engage in so wonderful a work, particularly when they have the promise of the living God that He will be their father and their friend, that He will ever be at hand to give them succor, and strength, and understanding, and power to accomplish the work allotted to them, if they will give their hearts to Him, if they will give their time and their attention to a study of the things that He has revealed. Men should be taught to honor and rejoice in this great responsibility. The Presidency of the Church should find in this army of men, when they seek after them, willing hearts, ready responses. Men should feel and say, "Yes, I am in the work of God; I have given myself to the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes; here I am; you can use me at home or abroad, wherever I am wanted, and I will be glad to do my part." That is our responsibility, and we recommend the Seventies of the Church of Christ to be in this manner of

spirit, ready, willing, obedient, anxious to be laboring for the planting of the work of God. We suggest to presiding men that the Seventies cannot set themselves to work in the stakes of Zion in a regular missionary effort, but the stake presidents can use these men, and of course other men as they see fit in the accomplishment of this labor, and there will be souls given for the hire of men who engage in the preaching of the gospel at home. Let us carry the word of God to those who are not of us here, just as cheerfully, just as earnestly, with just as much energy as we carry it abroad, and we will discover, perchance, that our Father in heaven has been working upon the hearts of many people and has planted them in the Zion of God that they may hear the word of the Lord.

God help us to love the truth, and to be true to it forever, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The hymn, "Though deep'ning trials throug your way," was sung as a soprano solo by Sister Margaret Summerhays.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

My brethren and sisters, when President Smith was addressing the congregation in this Tabernacle, this morning, I felt a keen interest in the very much afflicted people of Mexico, and I thought, what a blessed privilege it is to live under the stars and stripes in our own beloved country. When I heard and saw, as it was pointed out and painted before us, the awful picture that prevails in that unfortunate country, I thought how happy