

The combined choirs sang the hymn:

Shall the youth of Zion falter
In defending truth and right?
While the enemy assaileth,
Shall we shrink or shun the fight?
No!

PREST. CHARLES W. PENROSE.

Afflictions beneficial—Growth of "Mormonism"—"Go-to-Meeting-Sunday" movement—Religion of Christ both spiritual and temporal—Figurative sayings of the Savior—Actual realities of divine manifestations and miracles—Disposition of the tithes—The Lord is with His Church.

I am very grateful for the privilege of attending this conference. I always have had thankfulness in my heart at every conference that I have ever attended. I have very little to boast about, but a great deal to be thankful for, and today I feel more than ever my dependence on the Lord, upon His providences and mercies for my daily life and health and for the exercise of my calling in the holy priesthood. I prize my standing in the Church and the authority bestowed upon me to minister in the things of the kingdom more than anything else. The Lord has indeed been good to me all my days, and recently, in the afflictions that I have passed through in consequence of some accidents that befell me, if that is a proper term to use, I felt my dependence upon the Lord and I recognize more than ever His kindness to me. It is good to know that we can draw near to the Lord, and sometimes afflictions are needful that we may feel our dependence upon our heavenly Father fully, and be made to feel grateful in our souls for His kindness and mercies to us.

I can say, this afternoon, that I

do feel grateful indeed to my heavenly Father that I am able to be here today to listen to the voices of His servants, to mingle with the Saints, and to feel the sacred influence that attends us in our gathering. For I did feel this morning that the Spirit and power of God were with us, and I enjoyed immensely the address that we heard from our President. The information that was imparted, as well as his own instructions were of very great value to us. I am glad that the report which he read will be printed so that we all can read it if we will. I hope we are all readers of the *Deseret News*, as well as other periodicals that are published, because in that paper we will be likely to receive a full report of the address that was given to us this morning, with the very valuable statistics that were read and the instructions that were imparted in connection with them.

It is very clear from what we heard this morning that Zion is growing, and that the work of the Lord is spreading throughout the world; that that which is called "Mormonism" is not going backward but is marching forward, and not only our numbers are increasing but the faithfulness of the members of the Church is made more prominent. I believe that the Church is better organized now than ever. Our President said the conditions are better than ever before, and I am sure that what he said is correct, and that there is a feeling growing in the hearts of the members of this Church, that it is necessary to their happiness and well being and their salvation, to adhere strictly to the principles and teachings of the Church of which they are members. It is different with

us than with people in other denominations, not that I wish to say anything deprecatory of them, but in our Church the members are expected to be religious all the time, not merely on Sunday but every day of the week, and every moment of their lives; and that while they may not be able to live up fully to the standard which is set before them, they are working up in that direction. They are not going backward; they are growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and this is very cheering. They are growing in the duties that belong to them in a family capacity. They are growing in their attendance at places of worship. They are growing in the daily practice of the principles that conduce to bodily health and to spiritual advancement. This is evident from the reports that are received from time to time; and notwithstanding the many failures on the part of some people and the departures from the truth which occasionally occur, yet in the main, in the mass, the people called Latter-day Saints are advancing.

They are progressing truly. Not in the sense in which some people claim the title of "Progressives;" not going back to old, discarded and obsolete things, but reaching forward on a firm foundation, having planted their feet firmly on the rock of Truth. They are reaching up to the higher powers, and the Lord is with them and their progress is sure and steady in an upward direction. You can progress downward as well as progress upward, but our prize, the prize and mark of our high calling is in Christ Jesus; in His doctrine, in His principles, in His glorious example. He is the great exemplar, and while we lay hold upon the

truths which He has revealed, both in former and in latter days, we can imitate, we can emulate and walk up to the life and character of our Redeemer, that we may indeed be like Him, and so by and by become fit to dwell in His presence.

There is a movement on foot in the world to try to get people to go to church on Sunday. Notice will be seen in the *Deseret News* this evening in regard to that matter, which is desirable to be made state-wide, not only to occur in a few places but throughout the state, that people will go to church on a certain Sunday designated. That is a very good movement, so far as it goes, and we are in accord with it, because we believe in going to church every Sunday; not only one particular Sunday in one particular month in one particular year, but, according to the commandment given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ in latter days—I am not speaking of the old scripture but the revelation of God to us through Jesus Christ in the last days—which will be found in the fifty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and in which we are told to serve the Lord and worship Him at all times, under all circumstances; but on His holy day—He claims this seventh day or first day—it depends upon where you start from, to make it the first or seventh—one day out of seven at any rate, on His day, the day on which He rose from the dead, Sunday as we call it, the new Sabbath, the Christian Sabbath, on that day we are to do none other thing but devote ourselves to divine worship and service. We may partake of food, prepared with singleness of heart, but we are not to perform our usual labors but to go up to the Lord's

house on this, His holy day and worship Him in the spirit of holiness, to offer up our sacraments and pay our devotions to the Most High, to forgive one another if there be differences in our feelings with each other, to feel in our hearts that we want to bless mankind and to serve the Lord and become sanctified unto Him.

To be truly His people we have to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and all other things will be added to us in the due time of the Lord. Though we set our hearts sometimes upon the things of this world, they will perish with the using and pass away like the dream of a night vision; but that which abides and remains are the eternal verities, the things of God, the principles that go to make up His kingdom and the righteousness that makes up His character. If we serve the Lord with all our hearts, and place His work first in our souls, and practise righteousness according to the pattern that God reveals, everything that is of worth in all the eternities, throughout all the regions of space, everything that is good and beautiful and glorious and happifying, that makes for progress, for intelligence, for light, for wisdom, for power and for dominion will be ours. All things will be ours, and we shall be Christ's and Christ will be the Father's. Now that is the kind of religion that we have. This Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embodies these principles and it finds rules for our action in every department of life. It goes down to the commonest and so-called lowest things, and it rises to the highest.

Some of our good friends, if I may call them such, try to make it

appear that the Latter-day Saints' religion is a mere religion of temporalities and grosser things. That is where they make one of their big mistakes. While the Church of Christ reaches down to every department of life, here on the earth, in the flesh, and takes hold of what are called temporal things, yet it reaches up to the very highest. We are told that the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek reaches up not only to the ministration of angels and to the beings that are spiritual and to the heavenly Jerusalem, but to Christ, the Redeemer, and to God, who is the Father of all. Rising up to the highest and reaching down to the lowest, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ takes it all in and gives us rules and regulations for our conduct day by day and hour by hour, that we may be His people and that we may enjoy all there is to be enjoyed, both temporal and spiritual, and finally be prepared for the immediate society and presence of our Eternal Father and Jesus Christ, His beloved Son, our elder Brother in the spirit, and all the good and true and the just and the pure from God's creations; to mingle with them, to be in their company, to be one with them. That is our destiny, and in order to reach it, we have to bring ourselves in subjection to righteous laws and principles and orders and rules and ordinances, which are all, in their place, necessary to bring us to the great ultimatum and fulness of glory and of power and of dominion and of joy which shall be eternal.

So we want to observe the Sunday services every Sunday. Brethren and sisters, you that have come here to conference today, do not forget that. You have heard that told

a great many times, to carry away with you a determination that you will not only go to meeting now and then, but that you will observe the Sunday law that God has revealed. Not of going to Church for one day or one Sunday in the year, but regularly on the Lord's day, you will consecrate yourselves to His service; go up to His holy house, be in unison with the Saints, partake of the holy sacrament in remembrance of His body and of His blood shed for the remission of sins, and receiving a renewal of His Spirit, you may be able to serve Him during the coming week, every day, and be under the influence and direction of His Spirit; and in that you will have joy and peace. We want to establish peace in our homes. We want to have this Sunday spirit where we dwell. We want to be neighborly and kind, and have that good Spirit in our hearts spoken of by our President this morning, that Jesus Christ taught in that grand sermon on the mount. Not that we want to carry out literally, perhaps, everything that He said; some sayings of Jesus Christ are figurative in their nature. In the parables that He gave there are figures of speech, but right behind them all are facts and truths that we want to lay hold of and understand.

President Smith spoke this morning of the injunction of the Savior, "If a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other." We may not be able to come up to that yet fully in the literal sense, but we can live in the spirit of it, and we can forgive one another for injuries, and we can say, "I will not seek to do evil to that man that did evil to me, or that woman who tried to do evil to me, but I will do good

for evil, and if I can do a good turn to the person who injured me, I will do it;" that is the spirit we should manifest. I remember once that back in London we had an old veteran of the army who was a member of the Church; he was ordained a priest, and used to go out and preach on the street. One Sunday he was preaching and a man came up and slapped him in the face. "Now," he cried, "if you are a Christian, turn the other cheek." So he turned it, but exclaimed, extending his clenched fist, "Hit again and down you go." Well, I suppose many of us have that kind of spirit, but he was willing to-comply with the rule, and if the man had slapped him on the other cheek I think he would have gone down. So, as I said, many of the sayings of Jesus Christ are couched in figurative language.

For instance, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." But He did not mean that to apply literally to the physical hand. It was the spirit of it that was intended. If we have anybody in the Church who will not obey the laws of the Church, who will transgress the commandments of God, though that person may be one with authority and power, having done a great deal of good and with a great deal of influence, even if we should regard him as the right hand of the ward or stake where he belongs, yet if he will not be obedient to the laws of Christ, he has to be severed from the Church. The same idea in regard to the saying, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out." He did not mean for you to pull your eye out because it does not do its duty properly; but there was a great principle lying behind these figures of speech. When we read the scriptures we should seek

to understand the sense, spirit and meaning of the phrases that are used. But we have to be very cautious in regard to that other matter that the President was speaking of this morning; that some people want to make it appear that the statements in the scriptures concerning the revelations of God, His personal manifestations and those events that are called miraculous, are only imaginary; that the narration of them is only figurative. Let us be cautious about that. We must understand that when it is stated in these latter days that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith when he was a boy, the account is literally true, that they really appeared. He did not imagine it; he did not dream it; they manifested themselves to him, and what he received was a message from the eternal worlds, and all the communications to him by angelic ministers; all those administrations of John the Baptist and of Peter, James and John, and of Elijah, and Moses, and all those worthies spoken of as having visited the prophet in the Kirtland temple, that these were realities. He saw them, he heard them. He did not evolve the ideas out of his own inner consciousness or mind. They were not imaginary. And so in regard to these manifestations in ancient times. When Moses went up into the mount, and we are told that "he saw the God of Israel," the writer narrated a fact. When "Moses and Aaron, and Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel went up into the mount and saw the God of Israel," and described Him, what was under His feet and told about His hand not being laid upon them, they narrated what they saw and heard, and the

statement that is written by Moses is a statement of fact, not something imaginary.

These great truths that have come from the manifestations of God to the human family, abide; they are for our benefit. It is good for us to listen to the voice of inspiration and of instruction concerning them. And in these last days let us understand fully that the Church to which we belong is not founded upon any mere imagination or the thoughts and ideas and notions of men. It has come down out of heaven to the earth. The authority of the holy priesthood was not here. It did not continue from the days of the Savior down to the present time, through any of the denominations claiming succession. The world fell into darkness and into corruption and abomination, and went astray from the Lord. While many good men and good women existed on the earth, serving the Lord to the best of their ability, all authority and power in the holy priesthood were taken away from the earth, and the world was left to itself, and to the notions and opinions of men, and hence the confusion among the jarring sects and contending organizations of the latter times.

But the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has come from God to man. It was not evolved out of the ideas and opinions of men. It has not been organized by the wisdom of men, but every principle, every ordinance, every doctrine, every form of authority has been sent down in the last days from the heavens to the earth, and these are all embodied in the splendid organization which is called by the name of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is Christ's Church. He made it. He built it

up. Through Him came all the revelations from God to the Church, and He is with the Church now. And the Holy Ghost, the "personage of spirit," who bears witness of the Father and of the Son, is with this Church. That divine spirit which proceeds from the presence of God throughout the immensity of space, by which God created all things, spiritual as well as temporal, is in this Church, and is enjoyed by the members thereof, according to their faithfulness and diligence in seeking after it, and after these inspirations and gifts and manifestations. The Trinity—God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, making one Trinity and Deity, are with this Church, and they have built it up and they are going to stay with it, because a majority of the people of this Church are going to stay by these glorious truths that have been revealed, and live them in their lives, and train up their children in the way they should go, so that a purer and better and stronger and mightier generation will grow up to carry on the work of this kingdom. I rejoice in looking forward to the prospects of this Church, to its future. It will be great and glorious, and the time will come when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our God and His Christ, and He will rule and reign from the rivers to the ends of the earth, as the ancient prophets predicted.

I thank the Lord for the good things we heard this morning in regard to the progress of this work, and I bear testimony that they are true. One thing I hope will be impressed upon the minds of our brethren and sisters from the different parts of Zion, and that is the

statement that was read this morning by the President, that the tithes they pay—some of them—that the tithes that are collected in the various parts of Zion are expended right within the stakes to the extent of at least sixty per cent. If I were to express my own opinion, I would say the percentage is greater, and I think it will so be found when we get our statistics entirely and fully compiled; but the great bulk of the tithing is expended right in the stakes where the funds are collected. There are applications made every day to the Trustee-in-Trust for means to use in the erection or improvement of meeting houses and amusement halls, and so forth; so that there is a constant drain on the resources of the Church for the building up of the different stakes and wards of Zion. These things may be called temporal, but they are absolutely essential and they are a part of our great work, for the Lord has established Zion temporally as well as spiritually. His power is in it and His providences are over it, and He will be with it and with every individual in it, according to their faith and diligence in seeking after Him.

We believe in the spiritual things as well as the temporal things. Part of our baptism is spiritual. We are baptized in water by burial and raising up again for the remission of sins, and then we receive the Holy Ghost as a gift from God to us. It has various manifestations, but is the same Spirit. It is the light of the Lord. It is the witness for God. It enlightens; it comforts; it heals; it strengthens, it leads us on to progress, to comprehend truth as God sees it, and to walk in the light thereof, and to become sanctified unto Him. By the power

of that Spirit our souls can reach up to the highest. Don't I know that this is a fact? I do. In my career in this Church I have been placed many times, especially when on foreign missions, in positions where I needed to know the mind of the Lord, and by faith and prayer it has come to me, and I rejoice in bearing testimony of it. I do not think that I should feel that I lived really, if I could not be in communion with the higher powers by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God is for us all. We are baptized in it when we are confirmed, and it is our privilege to be guided by it always and to walk in its light and to have its joy and comfort and inspiration, and this can be our continual lot day by day. If we will observe the laws and commandments and rules and regulations given to us in this Church, the Lord will be with us; all things will work together for our good as individuals. Our very trials and difficulties, and the pains that we pass through sometimes, will inure to our experience and growth and benefit, and some day we will recognize that "all things have been done in the wisdom of Him that knoweth all things."

I feel full of joy and peace this afternoon to be in the midst of the Saints. I thank God for His goodness to me. I hope to live for the truth while my remaining days shall be upon the earth, and then when my time of departure comes I hope to mingle with the blest and labor behind the veil, no matter in what capacity. As the President showed this morning, we are willing to labor as teachers, or deacons, or do anything for the building up of the kingdom, either in the body or out of the body, wherever we are, wher-

ever we go. We want to live up to our Father and our God, to walk in His ways, and observe the laws of His righteousness and to prepare ourselves eventually for a glorious resurrection into His divine presence.

May the Lord help us to be faithful and true, keep our covenants and preserve ourselves from the evils of this world. May peace be in the homes of the Saints. May the power of God rest upon these good brethren who are here—the Presidents of Stakes and their counselors, the Bishops of wards and their counselors, and the teachers and laborers in the vineyard of the Lord at home and abroad; that they may carry with them a sacred and holy influence, and be able to give counsel and instruction to the people, and answer the numerous questions that are arising, many of which come up to the First Presidency and need not come there, but could go to these brethren who preside in the wards and stakes of Zion. God bless you, my brethren, with wisdom and understanding and inspiration, and may the light and blessings of the Lord which we are enjoying here in conference, spread abroad to the uttermost parts of the earth wherever there is a Saint of God desiring His blessing. May the work continue to increase and spread forth and prevail, unto the great consummation, when the earth shall be redeemed and Christ shall be our King, and God, the Father, will come and visit His people, and be their God, wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall no more be any sorrow or mourning or death, but all things shall be light and life and blessing and praise and glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.