

have received the truth, and I do not feel that we are egotistical, or feel that we have been chosen above our fellows, but rather that with the blessing that has come to us the Lord has placed upon us the responsibility, that we must go into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature, before the end shall come.

May the Lord strengthen our backs for the burden. May he inspire us to righteous living that will increase our faith and strengthen us for the work we have to do. May he give our brethren and sisters of this world an understanding of our purpose, that they may realize that it is with genuine love and devotion that we strive to extend the glorious message of life and salvation to them. I know that this is our Father's work. I know that it is the power of God unto salvation; and, standing as I do in your presence, and in the presence of the Lord, expecting in the not far distant future to give an account to him for the time that I have lived in the world, I bear my testimony to the divine mission of the Savior, and to that of the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY.

The first requisite in a servant of God—The Book of Abraham—Truth speaks for itself—The willing and the unwilling—Optimism versus pessimism—Duties of the Twelve Apostles—Their spirit and attitude.

"I'll go where you want me to go,
dear Lord,

Over mountain or plain or sea,
I'll say what you want me to say,
dear Lord,

I'll be what you want me to be."

This little verse embodies, to my mind, the true spirit of a Latter-

day Saint, the spirit that should actuate every man and woman in the Church of God. It is the spirit of the gospel, whose divine Author came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. I used to think that the first requisite in a servant of the Lord—say a bishop, was that he be an able business man, and I still believe business ability to be a very valuable asset in a bishop of this Church. But I have learned that it is not the first requisite. The first requisite in a bishop always has been and always will be, that he manifest a willingness to serve God. I used to think that the first requisite in an apostle was that he be a preacher and a writer, and that he go somewhere; but I have also revised my opinion upon that point. The first requisite in an apostle is that he shall be a willing worker for God, to go where he is sent, to stay where he is put, to say what the Lord wants him to say, to be what the Lord wants him to be, to go and come as directed by proper authority, and do whatever the Lord requires at his hands. This is the spirit that should animate and inspire every member of the Church of Christ.

One of the main purposes for which man was placed upon the earth was to demonstrate whether or not he would do all things that the Lord required of him. In confirmation of this statement I will read you a passage of scripture, one of the most comprehensive to be found in any of the sacred writings, ancient or modern:

"Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

"And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

"And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

"And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

"And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads forever and ever."

The passage I have read is from the Book of Abraham, translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith from papyrus found upon mummies exhumed from the catacombs of Egypt. This book was made the object of a rather fierce polemic attack a few years since, its authenticity being questioned by a scholarly gentlemen who then resided among us. His strictures were replied to by quite a number of our brethren, and the replies were published in the daily press.

Subsequently I conversed with this gentleman, and he asked me why I had not replied to him. I told him that I had been replying to him all over the country where I had been traveling, but that my reply had not happened to get into the papers. "Oh, indeed," said he, "and what have you been saying?" "I have been saying this, in substance: That it matters not where

truth is found, whether in the catacombs of Egypt, or in the mounds of North America; whether it comes through the lips of an ancient sage or a modern seer; that it matters not who translates it, or how many imperfections the translation may show; that truth is truth; and that the best criterion of judgment when the authenticity of any literary work is passed upon, is the spirit and character of its teachings." Said he: "I agree with you; that is the best standard by which to judge the authenticity of such a work." "Then," I affirmed, "the Book of Abraham needs no defense. It speaks for itself. It manifests its own divinity; for no one but God could have delivered such splendid teachings in such a majestic and sublime spirit as this book contains."

There is something in every great author that stamps itself upon his writings and renders them peculiar, or characteristic of himself. There is a Shakespearian ring to Shakespeare's writings; there is a Byronic ring to Lord Byron's poetry; and a Miltonic ring to the productions of Milton; and any literary expert can distinguish between them. Many poets have described the sunrise, but when one of them says:

"Night's candles are burned out, and
Jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain
tops,"

we know that Shakespeare has spoken; and no other poet could have worded it in just that way. Another calls upon God for inspiration,

"That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

The lines are Milton's, and the style is peculiar to that mighty son of song. It is the same with all great writers. The creation testifies of the creator. Is it, surprising, then, that when God speaks there should be some distinguishing feature to characterize the utterance and make it different from any utterance of mortal man? There is a spirit, an indescribable quality, a divine power in the word of God that cannot be successfully counterfeited. Men have tried to counterfeit it, but have failed ignominiously.

In the early days of this Church certain of its members who thought they had made the Prophet Joseph, because they had had a little more schooling than he, presumed to sit in judgment upon the revelations that he had received from the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord, by the Prophet, told them the thoughts of their hearts in these searching words:

"Your eyes have been upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and his language you have known, and his imperfections you have known; and you have sought in your hearts knowledge that you might express beyond his language, this you also know;

"Now seek ye out of the Book of Commandments, even the least that is among them, and appoint him that is the most wise among you;

"Or, if there be any among you, that shall make one like unto it, then ye are justified in saying that you do not know that they are true;

"But if you cannot make one like unto it, ye are under condemnation if ye do not bear record that they are true."—*Doctrine and Covenants*, 67: 5-8.

Well, one of them, who thought himself the wisest, and who possessed some learning, took up the challenge and actually attempted to frame a revelation; but it was a

flat failure. He could utter, of course, certain words, and roll out a mass of rhetoric; but the divine spirit was lacking, and he had to acknowledge himself beaten.

It is not so easy to put the spirit of life into things. Man can make the body, but God alone can create the spirit. You have heard, have you not, of the scientist who took a grain of wheat and endeavored to make one just like it? First he separated the grain of wheat into its component parts, and found that it contained so much lime, so much silica, so much of this element and that; and then he took other parts corresponding thereto, brought them together by means of his chemical skill, and produced a grain of wheat so exactly similar to the other that the natural eye could not detect any difference between them. But there was a difference, a vast difference, and it was demonstrated when he planted the two grains. The one that God made sprang up, and the one that man made stayed down. Why? Because the man-made grain of wheat had no spirit—only a body, and the body without the spirit is dead. Man cannot breathe into the body of things the breath of life; that is a function and prerogative of Deity. It is not so easy to frame revelations from God. A vain boaster making ridicule of the proverbs of Solomon, said: "Anybody can make proverbs." His friend answered, "Try a few," and the conversation ended.

Back now to the subject of willingness, referred to in the Book of Abraham. I repeat that willingness to serve God is manifestly the first and prime requisite of a Latter-day Saint.

Some wit has declared that the

automobile is fast resolving the human race into two great classes—"the quick and the dead" (Laughter). But long before the automobile was thought of there was an influence at work dividing the sheep from the goats, separating humanity into two grand divisions—those willing to do right, and those determined to do wrong. Even in the Church of God this spirit is manifest. The gospel makes us willing to do anything that the Lord requires; and that spirit can be trusted. When we are dominated by the opposite influence, it is a sure sign that we are skating where the ice is thin, and we had better get over to the other side of the pond. The spirit of the gospel is optimistic; it trusts in God and looks on the bright side of things. The opposite or pessimistic spirit drags men down and away from God, looks on the dark side, murmurs, complains, and is slow to yield obedience. There is a story told of two buckets that hung in a well, on either end of a long chain, so that when one went up the other went down, and vice versa. They were both drawing water out of the well, both doing precisely the same kind of work, but one of the buckets was an optimist, and the other was a pessimist. The pessimistic bucket complained of its lot, saying: "It doesn't matter how full I come up, I always go back empty." The optimistic bucket, with a bright smile, retorted: "It doesn't matter how empty I go down, I always come back full" (Laughter). Much depends, you see, upon the spirit in which a thing is viewed.

If I have achieved anything in the whole course of my life that is worthy to be called success, it is

because I have been willing to do the things required of me by rightful authority. Not always have I done them perfectly—I admit that freely; but God has been merciful to me, and in spite of my faults I have done enough to show him that I was at least willing to do what he required, and a certain measure of success has followed. When called upon my first mission, I had had little religious experience, but I possessed that first requisite in a servant of God—I was willing to go; and when I returned and was asked to serve as a block teacher, I was willing to so serve. A few weeks later I became the bishop of the ward—not because I wanted to be, but because the Lord wanted me to be, and I was willing to respond to the call made upon me. I was a ward bishop for nearly twenty-eight years; and the highest compliment I ever received from our beloved President Joseph F. Smith, and about the only one, as a bishop, was when he told the people of my ward that there must be something to a man when they could "stomach him" for twenty-eight years as their bishop (Laughter). Well, they "stomached" me because they had to; for I was there to stay until wanted elsewhere. I never thought I had the right to resign my bishopric any more than I had the right to release myself from my mission. My mother wrote to me saying: "Why don't you come home? All the missionaries have returned that went when you did, all but yourself. Why don't you come?" I answered: "Because I have not been released, and I will stay till I am released, if it be ten years or more. I will never ask for a release, will never return till the servants of God say, 'It is

enough; come home.'” And I meant it.

I have much enjoyed my labors as an apostle. I did not seek this exalted station, but was willing to accept the call when it came; and I stand here today ready to do anything that the Lord requires of me. I have never promised to do everything that man wants me to do; but that is not the divine requirement. We are here that it may be seen whether we will do all that the Lord requires at our hands. I am ready to do that, and my brethren are also ready.

There is a great deal of talk indulged in about the duties of the Council of the Twelve. Some people think that we should be always “on the go.” Well, we are pretty much “on the go,” all the time. As President Lyman was wont to remark, in his humorous way, “We are somewhere every Sunday.” But the trouble is that we don’t go far enough away to suit some people. It reminds me of that story told by Mark Twain about the governor of Nevada in early days. The governor’s relatives flocked to him in large numbers, and as he had nothing for them to do and wanted to be rid of them, he set them to work surveying a railroad “to a certain point east.” They went out surveying, and the first night came back to the point from which they started. They did likewise the second night, and the third. But after that they were too far away to return at night, and becoming anxious sent back word, “How far do you want this railroad to go?” The governor replied: “To the Atlantic ocean, blast you, and then bridge it and go on” (Laughter). That message brought the whole gang back again.

Even people outside the Church

are sometimes worried lest our apostles should not be going somewhere all the time. Two years ago last summer I found myself in Kirtland, Ohio, once the headquarters of the Church, the birthplace of my father, and the place where my grandparents received the gospel. Ohio was also one of the states where I labored during my first mission. The Kirtland temple is in the possession of what is known as the Reorganized Church, and a young man from West Virginia had charge of the building when I was last there. He was a recent convert to their faith, a part of which is that “the Utah Church,” as they call us, is in an apostate condition. He was full of information and an overweening desire to impart it. Not knowing who I was or where I was from, he began upon me, saying: “One of the distinctive features between our church and the Utah Church is that our apostles are always out in the field, while their apostles are always at home.” I knew I had him (Laughter). I answered: “Is that so? Why, I am just from Utah, and I happen to know that Hyrum M. Smith, one of the apostles of the Utah Church, as you call it, is now at Liverpool, presiding over the European mission; and I happen to know that Reed Smoot, another of their apostles, is at Washington, D. C., a member of the United States Senate; and I happen to know that still another, namely, your humble servant, is here talking to you in the state of Ohio.” “Oh,” said he, and changed the subject (Laughter).

Brethren and sisters, I bear my testimony that the members of the Council of the Twelve are just as ready today as they ever were to go

where they are sent. But they do not travel to and fro on their own account, independently of the authority above them; and they do not take their instructions from every Tom, Dick and Harry who thinks he understands their duties better than they do themselves. They are ready to go and come under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church—God's servants, the only ones empowered to direct their labors. In conclusion let me read to you a little paraphrase of my own upon the beautiful verse that I quoted at the beginning. This expresses my spirit, my attitude, and the spirit and attitude of my brethren:

"I'll go where you want me to go,
 dear Lord,
 I'll go whenever you say;
 But till I am sent, I'm not going
 to go,
 I'll stay where you want me to
 stay."

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

I hope you will pardon me for expressing a single thought. It is well understood that there are in the world two great principles or powers, and these two are opposed to each other. One is the principle or power of truth; the other is that of error and ignorance, which is evil. That is, God's truth and its adversary. It is too true often that the adversary of truth has been compelled to adopt or mix a little of God's truth with his errors and heresies, in order to better prevail over the whole truth, and more effectively to defeat it. These apparent improvements on the part of error are no great evidences of concurrence in the purposes of God; and we should not forget it!

The choir and congregation sang: "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet."

Elder William J. Kuhre, president of the Jordan stake of Zion, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The conference was called to order at 2 o'clock p. m. by President Joseph F. Smith who presided.

The Juab stake choir, under direction of Carl Nelson, sang: "Let the mountains shout for joy."

The opening prayer was offered by Elder Richard W. Young, president of the Ensign stake of Zion.

The Juab stake choir sang the anthem, "Praise the Lord."

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

If I were to express my present wish and feeling, I would say, the Lord bless the Juab stake choir.

ELDER DAVID O. McKAY.

God is Love—He is not causing the misery of the war-torn world; disobedience to his laws lies at the root of the misery—It is God's desire to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man—Man, with his free agency, must choose his own course, and the results of his follies cannot be charged to our loving Father—He would have men and nations choose the right, and not the wrong path. Indulgence in strong drink is destructive of manhood—When the nations wanted efficiency they were compelled to abandon drink and thus to obey a commandment of God—Comparison of loss of life through war and