

college life and at other times when separated from you—my people.

I, too, am pleased to bear testimony to the truth and divinity of the remarks that have been made at this conference. The words of Brother Stephen L. Richards concerning the welfare of our sons and daughters—our most precious resource—made a marked impression on my mind. Seven years of my life have been spent in eastern colleges and during that time, separated as I was from my kindred and from the Church, I had nearly all the temptations to resist. The teachings of the Church and the training of my good “Mormon” mother gave me strength. I prayed as she taught me to pray, I believed in God and in his guidance, I began every day’s labor with an earnest prayer for help, I closed each day with an expression of gratitude to my Heavenly Father for his guidance. Thus was I able, when surrounded with temptation, to make my life conform with the teachings of the Church and to live in accordance with the wishes of my excellent parents.

Prayer, as I see it, is the strongest factor for good that can come into the life of a boy. Unfortunate the youth who has to face the temptations of the world if in his childhood he has not learned to pray. If your soldier son learned this childhood lesson at your knee, rest assured his faith in God will keep him clean. If he returns he’ll do so in the strength and majesty and power of his clean manhood. If he gives his life to the glorious cause of human liberty he, by so doing, adds undying luster to your family name.

I have never been sufficiently

conceited to think that I deserve to stand in this sacred place that was occupied so recently by my distinguished father. His heart is aglow with delight, if he knows with what intensity many of you have expressed your congratulations to me for his sake. My fondest hope is that as a member of the Council of the Twelve I may merit in some degree the precious love and friendship you had for him.

May our heavenly Father make us better and happier from day to day, I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

I do not purpose to detain you long, but my mind has been particularly awakened on one or two subjects which I would like to call to the attention of this vast assembly of Latter-day Saints.

THE CRIME OF ADULTERY AND UN-CHASTITY

I wish to announce to you and call to your attention the fact that the next to the greatest sin and crime that can be committed, and for which the penalty in the law of God is just the same, is the crime of adultery and unchastity. Sometimes we hear rumors and reports from various parts of our country that are heart-rending and awful if they are true, and that is in regard to the lightness in which the principles of chastity are held by some of our young people, and in some respects are lightly passed over by those who ought to be teachers in regard to these principles, and who ought to instil into the hearts of the youth the principles of virtue and of chastity.

The Lord Almighty affixed in the law of Moses the penalty of death for the crime of murder or the shedding of blood, and the Lord Almighty affixed the same penalty of death upon the crime of adultery and unchastity. I hope that the Latter-day Saints will hold in mind the fact that there is no greater crime that men and women can commit, except the crime of murder itself, than that of adultery and unchastity; and let this be a precept to be taught and instilled into the minds of our children, and to our children's children henceforth, with all earnestness and fidelity on the part of those who are called to be watchmen upon the towers of Zion.

WHAT IS LIBERTY?

We have been talking, and we do talk very much, about this wonderful, this glorious, this most choice principle of liberty, for which we are willing to sacrifice all that we possess in a worldly sense, and that we are also willing to add in that sacrifice our own lives to defend it. What is it? What is this liberty for which we are willing to fight, for which we are willing to sacrifice life and all that we possess in the world? Let me tell you. It is simply the liberty of all mankind to worship God in righteousness; that is what it is; for all mankind to have the liberty to do right, the liberty to do good, the liberty to pursue happiness, in honor, in virtue and in uprightness. But it cannot for one moment descend in any degree to license or to infringement upon the rights of others. No man has any liberty to impose upon his brother, to rob or to steal, to lie or to bear false witness, or to injure or wrong his

fellowmen. When we are talking of this great and glorious principle of liberty it is that we may be free to worship God and to love him with all our hearts and minds and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to protect the principles of virtue and honor throughout all the world. That is the liberty that we are looking for and that we are willing to fight for.

We are not trying to defend the liberty of mankind to be drunken, to be debauchees, to advocate crime, to interfere with the rights of others. This is not liberty. The law of nations, as well as the law of God, prohibits it, and it cannot exist except it exist contrary to the laws of righteousness and contrary to the principles of liberty that we are willing to fight for and that we are striving for.

GOD NEITHER DESIGNS NOR IS THE CAUSE OF WICKEDNESS AND CRIME

I do not want this congregation, or any of the congregations of the Latter-day Saints, to conceive the idea, or to entertain it for one moment, that the true and living God—the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—who so loved the world that he sent his Only Begotten Son into the world, to bleed, to die, and to be sacrificed for the sin of the world, the Father of our spirits, he who loves his children, is in any degree responsible for the carnage, the bloodshed, the crime and the infamy that is today being perpetrated because of war, or any other cause, throughout the world. God is not responsible for it. I want you to let this sink into your hearts and remember it. God does not design wickedness or crime in the midst of his children, neither is he the cause of it. One of the apos-

bles said: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." The Lord God Almighty has no pleasure whatever in the nations of the earth contending one with another and destroying themselves. All this is contrary to the will of God, contrary to his purposes, and contrary to his love, and to the very nature of the true and the living God. He loveth his children; he desires them to have life everlasting and not death. I pity the expressions that I have heard so many times in the public print from ignorant preachers and some poor mothers whose sons have been sacrificed at the front: "Why does God permit it? Why has God permitted my son to be slain? Why does God permit the war that is existing today in all the nations of the earth?" The answer is: Because the nations of the earth, together with their leaders, exercise their freedom, the freedom of their agency, to pursue their wicked course, which results in war and in the death and destruction that is being perpetrated today throughout the nations of the earth. The Lord has no pleasure in it, and I do not want the Latter-day Saints to conceive the idea that God is responsible, or to charge him with the crime of desiring the destruction of his children. It is not true!

GOD LOVES AND IS THE AUTHOR OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE

I just wanted to say those few words to the Latter-day Saints. The Lord loveth peace. The doc-

trine of the Savior of men was "Peace on earth, good will to men," love, love unfeigned. The greatest of all the commandments that was ever given to the children of men is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." If in the central nations of the earth this spirit of love had existed, this principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ; if this glorious admonition had been taken to heart by the rulers of those nations, there never would have been any war, there never would have been any bloodshed, there never would have been the devastation and ruin and evil conditions that exist today. It is because the people of the world have not the gospel. It is because they do not obey the truth. It is because they have not Christ, and therefore they are left to themselves, and the results that we see are the consequences of their own misbehavior and of their own wicked deeds.

CLOSING ADMONITIONS

I thank you, my brethren and sisters, for your attendance at this conference. You have shown your integrity, your love for the work in which you are engaged, your respect for this great occasion of meeting together on the 6th of April, in commemoration of the day on which the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. We want you to continue to entertain this faith, this confidence, this love, this deep interest in the work in which you are engaged,

that at every recurrence of this occasion, and of the semi-annual conference of the Church, you may be punctual in attendance at the conferences and show your willingness to uphold and to sustain the work throughout all the country where you dwell.

I feel to extend my gratitude and my thanks to my brethren who have spoken the words of truth and of righteousness, and who have given exhortation that an angel from the presence of God could not have given more clearly, more intently and fervently from the heart than our brethren have given it to you during our conference. Let us prize their words, their admonitions; let us hearken to their cautions, to their warnings, and to their exhortations to us to observe the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and live like Latter-day Saints—more especially like Latter-day Saints than like some “Mormons” live. I want to say to my dear Brother Richard, when he speaks of that mother of his and calls her a “Mormon” mother, he means well, but really she was a Latter-day Saint. I knew her. (Laughter.)

I also desire to express my pleasure and gratitude and thanks to those who have made music for us, our soloists, our singers of duets, the choir, and the leaders of our music. We thank them for their

efforts, and we rejoice and enjoy exceedingly their harmony, for it is a part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the true spirit of worship. We will now sing, “The Spirit of God like a fire is burning,” and this semi-annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be adjourned for six months.

The choir and congregation sang: “The Spirit of God like a fire is burning.”

The benediction was pronounced by Elder Joseph C. Bentley, President of the Juarez stake of Zion.

Conference adjourned for six months.

Prof. Anthony C. Lund conducted the singing in the Tabernacle. Prof. John J. McClellan played the accompaniments, interludes, etc., on the great organ, assisted by Edward P. Kimball, and Tracy Y. Cannon.

The stenographic reports of the discourses were taken in the Tabernacle by Elder Franklin W. Otterstrom, assisted by Clarence Cramer; and in the Assembly Hall and by the Bureau of Information, by Elders Frederick E. Barker, and Fred G. Barker.

EDWARD H. ANDERSON,
Clerk of Conference.