

way we can begin to discharge our obligations to the world for all that we have received is to so live that we can make the world better for our having been in it; that every citizen of our acquaintance can point to us with pride as his neighbor; to take upon our shoulders a share of the world's work and be of actual service to our fellowmen; to be clean in body and soul, and see to it that our feet shall never lead into places where we would not want our children to follow.

General Pershing, standing before the assembled houses of Congress on the 18th of last month, upon his triumphant return from France, said, among other things, in giving his report: "The burdens that fell to the lot of our soldiers have been heavy, and the way beset by many obstacles, but faith in the righteousness of our cause and trust in Almighty God have given us courage and inspiration." So I say to you, my brethren and sisters, our burdens may be heavy and our way may be beset by many obstacles, yet faith in the righteousness of our cause, which is the greatest cause under heaven, and trust in Almighty God, who is our Father and our Defender, will give us courage and inspiration, and we, like our great general, will come out victorious in the end, and God will look upon our labors well pleased.

God bless us with courage and faith and love and sympathy and gratitude, that we may be wise stewards and do the very best we can with what we have, I pray in the name of him whose servants we are and in whose vineyard we labor. Amen.

Alexander Anderson, sang a solo: "I Come to Thee."

ELDER ANTHONY W. IVINS

This morning at 8:30 o'clock, a meeting was held in the upper room of the Bishop's building, on this block, by representatives of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations of the Church. No program had been arranged; it was an informal meeting, and as it progressed I thought of this scripture, which I will read, from Joel:

THE SPIRIT OF TESTIMONY.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.

The meeting was given to the congregation, and men were asked to give expression to their faith, and to make any suggestion they might feel like making regarding the important work in which this auxiliary association of the Church is engaged. They stood upon their feet, frequently two or three at the same time. There were men there from Canada, from Idaho, from northern Utah, men from Arizona and from Mexico. There were tall men and short men; some of them were light complexioned, some dark complexioned; some were older

men, others quite young men. There was great diversity of character written in their faces and exemplified in their words, but there was this one thing which characterized the remarks made by every person who spoke. They all had the same testimony, it made no matter where they lived. They all bore witness to the divinity of this great latter-day work. They all bore witness to the fact that the Lord himself, our Father, who is in heaven, had made good this promise which I have read here from Joel, although none of them referred to it, that in the latter days he would pour out his Spirit upon the people, that the influence of the Holy Ghost, referred to by Brother Hale, would be among men again; and, not only men but women, would enjoy it. It was a veritable time of refreshing to sit there and listen to the testimonies of these people. Men, some of them, who had gone away from the Church in their youth; they had been careless, indifferent, had gone off into mining camps; their lives had not been the lives that Latter-day Saints should lead, but when they had turned to the Lord and sought him in faith, he had never failed to respond to their petition. And now they had been born to newness of life, they knew the truth, they were enlisted in God's cause, and their lives devoted to his work. It was a witness to me, my brethren and sisters, of the fulfilment of the words of the Redeemer himself.

You know that men sought Jesus. They desired to know the way by which they might attain to everlasting life. They offered money on occasions. But he told them that the gifts of God could not be purchased with money, and bore witness that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus marveled at that. He did not understand what it meant. Then the Redeemer illustrated the thought by saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." How often in the Church we encounter people who lack faith! People addressed us at that meeting this morning who, I knew, because of their accent and peculiarity of speech, were not American born. I knew they had come from abroad. I knew the gospel had found them away over there in England, possibly in Ireland, possibly in Scotland, or in Wales, or in Scandinavia, or other of those old world countries. Their testimony was the very same as the testimony of boys whom I knew, and who were there this morning, whose grandfathers were in the Church, who were among those who first carried the gospel into the old world. There is no difference of nationality; there is no difference of sex. It doesn't matter where we live, doesn't matter, as I remarked, whether we are tall or short or blonde or brunette, if we go to the Lord he will make good the promise which he has made to the people of the world, that "He who seeketh me in faith shall find me, he who asketh in faith believing, I will answer; to him who knocketh, I will open;" and just as certain, my brethren and sisters, as the Lord has made good that promise, so is it certain that he who does not seek does not find, to him who does not knock it is not opened, and to him who has no desire to know the truth, truth is a sealed book.

A REBIRTH NECESSARY—A CONVERSION TO THE GOSPEL.

I have often thought, and I have thought of it recently more than at any other period in my life, that there is, it seems to me, among young men and women in the Church, a spirit of indifference. This is not general, but there are too many exceptions to the general rule. We find among these boys and girls a lack of faith, a lack of knowledge; among many of them apparently there is a sincere desire to know, and yet they appear to be in doubt; I wonder if we have not thought, we fathers and mothers, that from the fact that our children were born in the Church, born under the covenant, and that we have, in the Church, auxiliary associations that are designed to teach faith,—whether we have not left our children entirely to the direction, or to a great extent to the direction, of these facts and organizations, and we have neglected to impress upon their minds that boys and girls born in the Church of godly parents must be born again to know Christ and God, just as a person who has been born in the world must. It isn't sufficient that our parents had faith. We cannot live and survive upon the faith of others. These boys and girls here, who are in this choir in attendance upon this school, good boys and girls, never can know the truths of the gospel to satisfy their souls unless they go to the Lord for it; and I promise them, as I promise all men and women, that the prayer of faith will bring response, comfort will come to our hearts and our souls, and that invisible but nevertheless potent power which bears witness of the truth will satisfy us so that we cannot be in doubt, and once we are thus converted to the truth, the whole work practically is accomplished. We are worried to know what means we may adopt to protect our children from the sins of the world, from the great wave of immorality that is sweeping over the country today as it has never swept over it before. We may study devices, we may discuss ways and means, but we will never find an effective way to combat it, except through conversion to the truth of the gospel, to get our hearts in communion with God our Father, to become possessors of his Spirit, for the Spirit of the Lord will protect us from the sins of the world. I do not believe that a boy or girl who has in sincerity prayed to God when he or she arose in the morning, or when he or she retired to bed at night, has ever transgressed the laws of the Lord upon that day. He will protect them. But when we forget him, we are left without that necessary guidance and protection. So I appeal to you to exercise faith. Parents, inspire in the hearts of your children a desire to establish closer relationship with the Lord.

CONVINCING TESTIMONY OF A CONVERSION.

This homely story may illustrate my thought as well as anything I could tell. When I was a boy, I had close friends, as all boys have, neighbors with whom I was chummy, and among them was a boy about my own age. We lived near together; we went to school together. This

boy had two older brothers. His parents were devoted Latter-day Saints. The country at that time was wild and lawless along the frontier. Those older brothers became freighters; they loved horses and mules, and they delighted in putting together splendid teams, and drove those teams into Montana, and west into Nevada, and down to the coast in California, freighting back merchandise which in those days was needed for the use of the people. They became two of the most profane men I ever knew, indifferent to the faith of their fathers, and intemperate. One day the body of the elder of those two boys was brought into our town, and his funeral services were held there. He had been killed in a difficulty with another man. The other, the next older, brother drifted away, and I lost sight of him. But this boy, who was my chum, I grew up with, and pretty soon he obtained a team and he went off to Silver Reef to freight, and learned to swear, and he was following the very road that his older brothers had followed. About that time I lost track of him. I went to Mexico. I came back after fifteen or twenty years, and had occasion to go up into Idaho to visit one of the stakes of the Church. I found this man there, presiding as bishop of one of the wards! I found one of his sons the bishop of another ward. I found another son president of the Mutual Improvement Association; and one or two of the boys had been on missions. He had a splendid home there, presided over in dignity by his good wife.

I looked at it all with wonder, and he smiled and said, "I know what you are thinking about."

I said, "Tell me how it all happened."

"Well," he said, "you know that I was going just the way my brothers went."

"Yes," I said, "that is what surprises me."

"My parents had always taught me a better way," he said; "they had urged me to read the scriptures, and finally I decided that I would read the Book of Mormon, and I did while I was freighting. I read it through, and when I came to certain words in the last chapter of Moroni, I was very deeply impressed with them." These are the words to which he referred:

And I seal up these records, after I have spoken a few words by way of exhortation unto you.

Behold I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

He said, "When I read those words, I thought I would put the Lord to the test, and I stopped my team, wrapped the lines around the

brake, and got down from that high seat, on one of those old-fashioned California wagons that were common in early days, and I turned off from the road; and, you remember that piece of straight road," he said, "just below the twist?"

"Yes," I said, "I remember every rock there is on it, because I have freighted over it."

"Well, I went out there," he said, "under those high cliffs to the east of the road, went around behind some rocks where no one could see me, kneeled down there, and thought I would pray, and I couldn't say a word."

Have any of you boys and girls ever tried to pray for the first time and found it difficult to say a word? There is always someone right there near you telling you you cannot pray, and it would not do any good if you did. That is one of the devices of the enemy of truth to prevent you from placing yourself in harmony with the Lord.

"But," he said, "by making a great effort I managed to appeal to the Lord, told him that I wanted to know the truth, and I want to tell you that those fellows on the day of Pentecost never received a stronger testimony than I did; I felt that I was surrounded by consuming fire, and I got up on my feet knowing just as well that the Lord lived, that Christ was the Redeemer of the world, that the gospel had been restored through the prophet Joseph Smith, and that the Book of Mormon is a divine record, as I knew that I was there; and I got on to my wagon, drove home, left the road and came up here, located on this quarter section of land, and you can see the rest."

PRAYER IS THE ROAD TO CONVERSION.

Shortly after that, I was back at my old home, and met another friend of mine, with whom I had been more familiar than with the other. He was an entirely different kind of boy. There was nothing wild nor rough in his character. His father and mother were very refined people. We grew up together. As we got older, our interests became identical. We traveled together, we rode the range together; we went out for days and sometimes weeks together, sleeping under the same blankets. All this time my faith was developing, I was reading the scriptures, I was praying to the Lord, and I was full of desire to convert this boy companion of mine; but for some reason I never could make any impression upon him.

So in after years, when I went back there and found him, his hair whiter than mine, I talked with him. I called him by name. I said, "We are getting old, we ought to be doing something, we ought to be thinking of the future." He had never married. A more industrious man I never knew. I never heard him speak an improper word. But he had never married. I said, "For my sake, if not for your own, I want to urge that you study the word of the Lord; read the Book of Mormon."

"Why," he said, "I have just finished reading it, and the Doctrine and Covenants, too."

I said, "What did you find in them?"

"Why, I found lots of good things, and nothing that was bad."

"Did it impress you particularly, did it change your religious view, did it add to your faith?"

"No, not specially."

I said, "Did you ask the Lord to help you, as you read those books, to make you understand them, comprehend their meaning and their importance to you?"

He looked up at me and said, "Toney, I never prayed a word in my life."

I knew then why he lacked faith; I knew then why testimony of the truth never came to him, and I knew that it mattered not how long he lived, unless he went to the Lord, pleading with him for grace to understand, that he never would comprehend his word and will as he might otherwise have done.

Now that is the secret of it, my brethren and sisters. That is what I want to say to these boys and girls here. If you are in trouble, go to the Lord; if you are tempted, go to him; if you have, in an unguarded moment, done that which is wrong, go to the Lord. He will forgive and pardon transgression and sin, no matter though it may have been grave. No persons are so far lost, except they may have committed the unpardonable sin, and that would be exceedingly rare, that God's arms are not stretched out to them for their redemption. Our transgressions will be blotted out from the book of his remembrance, our sins will be washed white as wool, through faith in him, and our hearts will be filled with joy, and confidence in ourselves, in each other, and in our Father, through the exercise of faith.

LET US DO OUR PART IN HUMILITY AND FAITH.

Now may the Lord bless us all, my brethren and sisters, and help us at this time, when his help is so greatly needed, needed as it never before has been needed in the history of the Church and in the history of the world, for we have never before been confronted by such problems, never before has the world, has civilization, been in greater danger, never before has so much depended upon you and upon me for the redemption of the world and the maintenance of the doctrines of the gospel in it. May the Lord help us to do our part, each of us, in humility before him, I humbly pray. Amen.

ELDER DAVID O. McKAY

There have been many features of this most excellent conference that have delighted my soul. I have rejoiced with you in the wonderful testimonies that have been given, and in the divine instructions that have fallen from the lips of those who have addressed us.