

and shall be fulfilled, and so I say to you, and this is my closing message: Search the scriptures; make yourselves familiar with that which the Lord has revealed for your salvation, the salvation of your house, and of the world. Do not procrastinate the day of repentance. Let us walk humbly, righteously, diligently before the Lord and let, above all things, this spirit of love dwell in our hearts for all men and more especially for our brethren. If we see them going wrong, if we see them doing that which they ought not do, there is a proper way to correct them. The Lord has pointed out the way and we can make the matter right nearly every time and if we can not make it right with the offending brother there is a procedure which we may take to make it right, and I have no right to backbite, to faultfind, to condemn before others one of my brethren unheard, whether he be high or lowly. The Lord has pointed out the procedure in all of these matters for our guidance.

Let us love the Lord for this is the foundation of all things. It is the first commandment, and the second commandment, to love our neighbors as ourselves, is like unto it, and when we have done that we have fulfilled the law, because there is nothing that will be left undone. The Lord bless you, my brethren and sisters, let us stand together united in the service of the Lord, I pray in his name. Amen.

A solo entitled, "The way of life," was rendered by Ellen Copen-
ing.

ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

I am very thankful to find that I am in harmony with what has been said in this conference in the addresses of the brethren, from that of the president of the Church and the prophet of the Lord at the opening session, to the last Amen by the speaker who has just closed. A variety of topics have been touched upon, and I have felt to regret in a way that the time limitations did not permit several of the speakers to go on as I could see from the trend of their remarks they would have done, had they had time—to a fuller elucidation of the very splendid principles they have presented.

LOOKING AT THINGS FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES

We have been able to look at things from different angles by following the remarks of the several brethren, and all harmonize. I believe that the remarks are peculiarly timely. Not that I feel that there is any great danger of the Latter-day Saints going astray as a body—for I have faith in them, and I know that they are the Lord's people—but because there are at this time conditions before the people upon which divergent views are held; and, consequently, not all see things from the same angle, and therefore do not have precisely the

same image formed upon the retina of their spiritual and physical eyes.

Very much depends, you know, upon our point of view. There are men who would not recognize a photograph of their own home if it were taken from the rear, for they have been in the habit of looking at it only from the front; and such a one would probably say: "That is not mine; that is not the way I would build a house; it is all wrong."

THE LORD CAN NOT LOOK UPON SIN WITH ALLOWANCE

I was impressed by the brief and passing remark made by Brother Ivins, this morning, in which he incorporated one of the most profound epigrams in scripture, in which the Lord repeated words that he had before given through the mouth of his ancient prophet Alma. They appear in the 45th chapter, 16th verse, as Alma's words spoken under inspiration. In the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, 31st paragraph, they appear as the direct words of the Lord:

"For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance."

I read further:

"Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;

"And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received, for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of Hosts.

"And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth, I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh,

"For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion;

"And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world.

"Search these commandments for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

"What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same;

"For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen."

This is no ancient scripture only. The principles involved were proclaimed early in the history of the race; and they have been given anew to you, to me personally, to the people who are living in this dispensation, in this year of our Lord.

"I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance." I say that epigram is startling. It has attracted the attention of theologians; it has led them to profound reflection; it has enlightened their minds. In the scripture that I have read to you the Lord draws a very clear distinction between sin and the sinner. The dis-

tion is real and vital. Some may say: Can there be sin without a sinner? Can there be theft without a thief? Can there be falsehood without a falsifier? Can there be murder without a slayer? I take the liberty of reading to you a few lines of my own, with scripture incorporated, as already published:

Admittedly, sins may be planned but not executed, thought out, though not carried to the extent of actual commission, as is connoted by the Lord's words respecting adultery: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matt. 5:27-28).

Men may be potential liars, robbers or murderers, but, lacking opportunity to become criminals in fact, or restraining their evil impulses through considerations of policy or personal advantage, they may maintain outward signs of probity. The wearing of a sheep's fleece by a ravening wolf is no modern camouflage.

But in all such dissemblings, the fact of wicked purpose exists; and the evil purpose, thought, or desire, is of itself essentially sin; and such a case, therefore, presents no phenomenon of abstract guilt, but actual and individual offense; for the thinker of evil is a sinner.

Who of us can regard tuberculosis, smallpox, or the insidious and deadly influenza that has swept the earth, with other feelings than repugnance and fear? Yet we treat the afflicted person with effort to bring about his recovery; and if we loved him while well, we do not hate him because he has become ill; but, to the contrary, we become the more solicitous in his behalf. Health officers and the medical fraternity look not upon disease with compromise, toleration or allowance. They are the marshalled assailants of physical malady, whatever its disguise; and their best means of waging war on disease is that of ministering to each afflicted one, while taking all measures possible to protect the well against infection.

The germs of disease exist, whether they find lodgment in human bodies or not; and, by analogy, we may say that the spirit of or incentive to thievery, adultery, or murder, is alive, as the definite contagion of evil, though men may or may not be actually overcome thereby. Now, in the case of physical affliction, definite treatment is invoked; and compliance with prescribed conditions is enforced so far as the patient will submit.

In fine and purposeful irony, the Divine Healer met the casuistry of certain self-righteous scribes and Pharisees with the declaration: "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Mark 2:17.)

THE LORD, HOWEVER, IS MERCIFUL TO THE SINNER

But as the scriptures abundantly affirm, and as experience demonstrates, there are none of us entirely free from sin; to the contrary, every one is in need of the Great Physician's healing ministrations. "Sin

is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4); furthermore: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10); and again "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (I John 1:8).

I learn from the scriptures that the Lord hates sin in every one of its multifarious manifestations, but he is kind and merciful and long-suffering toward the sinner. It is true that disease may come upon us through our own neglect, or our own actual commission of overt acts. It may come upon us even against the best we can do. The diseases I have named, most of them, and diphtheria, and others, are classed by physicians as filth disease, because the germs that produce them breed in uncleanness; but even the cleanest of men, even the man who has lived according to the laws of health, may come down under the stroke of one of those dread maladies; and though I hate diphtheria, I may love with a yearning that leads me to fasting and prayer, the one who is stricken. Let us segregate the ideas even as the Lord hath done.

A MEANS OF TREATMENT FOR THOSE WHO SIN

Now the Lord has provided a means of treatment for those who are spiritually afflicted, even as means are provided for those who are physically ill, and by compliance with his laws of spiritual health we may, perchance, be healed, however ill we may have become. But we should not lose sight of the fact that the Lord has no compromise with sin. He has provided that if any man in this Church shall offend, he shall be dealt with as a man who is afflicted with smallpox must be dealt with, with the hope of saving him. The purpose of the Church is to heal, not to spread disease; to build up, not to tear down; to save, not to destroy, but that does not mean that we are to look upon sin in our midst in any namby-pamby way and pass it by.

The Lord hath declared that there must not be iniquity in his Church, and he has provided officers whose specific and specified duty it is to hunt out iniquity, to run it down, so that every case may be dealt with, and the afflicted ones perchance, be saved. He has not told us to cover up sin in the Church. That is not the Lord's will, nor purpose nor plan. He has told us that we should avoid gossip and slander and all kinds of misrepresentation, and speaking ill against our brethren, whether we regard them in their official capacity as officers of the Church, general or local, or otherwise. I have no right to speak in condemnation of my brother, unless I do it in an official capacity, in the exercise of the authority of the Holy Priesthood, and then I should do it in love and with yearning for him.

SIN SHOULD BE EXPOSED

You have raised your hands in this great building many times, sustaining me in the position to which I have been called. I make myself the subject of the illustration. Perchance you will have an op-

portunity to do that again, or to vote against me. But does that mean that because you vote and sustain me in my position that I am exempt from judgment if I do wrong? By no means. But there is a way in which your complaints, if you are in any way justified in making such, may be given consideration. If any one of you feel that you can not sustain me in my position, because of anything you know of me as being wrong, I pray you, come to me, come to me. I will give you a hearing; I will listen to you patiently, and if you do point out any error in my life, anything in which I have been doing that which I ought not to do, the Lord being my helper I will thank you and bless you for it, and bless him who inspired you to come. Or, go to those who preside over you and me, and let them judge between us. But do not go around gossiping about me, and trying to undermine my influence, which I desire before the Lord to be for good. Do not condemn me unheard. Do not pick out a rumor from the air and think it over and magnify it until it becomes an established fact in your disordered mind. But on the other hand, if I am guilty of sin that makes me unfit to be one of the goodly company to which I have been called, that should be known; it should be pointed out, in the proper way and in the proper spirit.

DISCIPLINE REQUIRED IN THE CHURCH

Now, the Lord has provided that those in his Church shall live according to the law, and he makes a distinction between the law pertaining to the Church and what we call the secular law, or the law of the land, but he requires obedience to each. My love for my brother in this Church does not mean that I am to shield him when he has violated the law of the land, nor that I am to stand between him and righteous judgment. This Church is no organization like that of the secret combinations of old, which the Lord hath said he hates, the members of which were pledged, and bound by oath and covenant, that they would stand by each other whether right or wrong, that they would cover up one another's crimes, that they would justify one another in theft and murder and in all things that were unclean. It is no such organization at all. It would not be of God if it were.

The resurrected Christ, after his ascension, in giving the revelation through John, instructing the revelator to have messages sent to the different churches, included in the message to the church at Ephesus the word that he did have something good to say to them, because, as I read, "Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." (Rev. 1:6.) He did not say he hated the members of that unholy band, but he did hate their doctrines and practises, which were the doctrines of a secret combination, the members of which were pledged to stand by each other no matter what any one of them might do. That the Lord requires discipline in his Church is made plain in the revealed word, as you may read in the 42nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And again, I say, thou shalt not kill; but he that killeth shall die.

"Thou shalt not steal; and he that stealeth and will not repent, shall be cast out.

"Thou shalt not lie; he that lieth and will not repent, shall be cast out.

"Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else;

"And he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith, and shall not have the Spirit, and if he repents not he shall be cast out.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery; and he that committeth adultery, and repenteth not, shall be cast out."

And then, to cut the matter short, he says:

"Thou knowest my laws concerning these things are given in my scriptures; he that sinneth and repenteth not, shall be cast out."

In the latter part of the same revelation, we find these instructions:

"And if a man or woman shall rob, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land.

"And if he or she shall steal, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land.

"And if he or she shall lie, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land.

"And if he or she do any manner of iniquity, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law, even that of God.

"And if thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone; and if he or she confess, thou shalt be reconciled."

Such is the law to the Church, and respecting the law of the land, the Lord has made it perfectly plain that we are subservient to it and are required to sustain it. Though we have our tribunals in the Church, established according to the order of the Lord, there is no conflict between their administration and that of the courts of the land.

TENDER TREATMENT FOR THE SPIRITUALLY SICK

"Let no man break the laws of the land," saith the Lord in the 58th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, "for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land: Wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet." And then referring to the laws previously given he said: "Behold, the laws which ye have received from my hand are the laws of the Church, and in this light ye shall hold them forth. Behold here is wisdom."

I remind you of the strictness with which the Lord regards his people. He has provided tender treatment for those who are spiritually sick, and it is our duty to assist those who are thus stricken. If I go to my brother in the spirit of kindness, and that spirit must be with me if I go to him in the power of my office and calling, giving unto him words of counsel, and he receive them not in the spirit in which I go, he becomes an offender before the Lord. If I do so when my brother comes to me, I become an offender. But you know there are

those among us and elsewhere—the world is full of them—who do not want to be criticized, except in the broad sense of the term, and then the criticism must be favorable. They want to be patted on the back; they want to be told that everything they have said and done is right; and if you point out, perchance, that they should be on their guard against this or that, or they should right this wrong or that, too frequently they become offended against the one who has come to them even as a physician would come to one afflicted with disease.

KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD

To the people I say, keep the commandments of the Lord as you have been admonished again and again. Do not lie, do not steal, do not take advantage of your neighbor, do not have lustful thoughts, do nothing that is unclean. Keep these commandments of the Lord. Bishops, presidents of stakes, keep ye the commandments of the Lord. When you have under your care those who are offending, you shall deal with them as the Lord hath provided, in all kindness and with a desire to save them; but nevertheless, you are not to cover up iniquity in the Church. The spirit in which this jurisdiction is to be exercised is set forth by the Lord in plainness, as I read to you from the 121st section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

“Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

“Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

“That the rights of the Priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

“That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control, or dominion, or compulsion, upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the Priesthood, or the authority of that man.”

TOLERATION ENJOINED

You see the safeguards that the Lord has set. Now, the Lord hath enjoined love for our fellowmen upon us, such love as will cause us to do even disagreeable things for their welfare, to do that which we do not like to do, to speak a word of caution when, perchance, we would rather not, lest we be misunderstood; but the Lord requires it at our hands; and he has enjoined upon us tolerance toward one another. There are some who have never reasoned carefully along the line of the possibility of two men, for example, looking at things from different points of view, and seeing different images, and yet both seeing the truth. “How is it possible,” some have asked, “that two divergent ways may be right?” Why, they may turn, and they may come to be right after all. I can not believe that two men, both desiring the same ultimate attainment, and that good, and both working toward that end

with full and sincere purposes of heart, can not both be right, although they seem for the time being to be going differently.

Let me be specific. Do you mean to tell me that all good is in one or the other of the great political parties? Why, if so, if it be right to be a Democrat, then it is wrong to be a Republican. No, my friends. It may be perfectly right for you to be a Democrat and equally so for me to be a Republican, or vice versa. We have our different ways of looking at things, but if I believe that the principles of the Democratic party are right, I am not justified in condemning my brother who believes that the principles of the Republican party are right. I believe that both of these great parties, that is to say all honest members thereof, have at heart the country's good, the nation's welfare. They differ as to the best means of attaining this; and to our great sorrow they have dragged into the field of partisanship questions that never should have been brought in, because they are fundamentally not partisan at all.

THE CHURCH IN ALL THE AFFAIRS OF LIFE

Only the other day I was asked, in the course of conversation with an intelligent gentleman, not a member of our Church:

"Is the 'Mormon' Church in politics?"

I answered him: "Most assuredly it is in politics, and also in business, in statesmanship, in all the affairs of life, teaching the people to do what is right so far as it possibly can."

"Well, has the Church any candidates in the pending election?"

"Yes, indeed," said I, "the Church has a full ticket, and is counseling its members just how to vote."

Now, let me tell you just how you should vote, just as I told him. The Church is telling its members to look upon the franchise as a sacred gift, to exercise it according to their very best judgment before the Lord, and the Church's ticket is the ticket of the best men, according to the best judgment of the people, to whichever party they belong. Vote the party ticket if you honestly feel that to be best, or vote for the men you think will most effectively subserve the needs of country, state, and people.

OUR RELIGION MAKES FOR HONESTY AND TOLERANCE

You have your agency and you know that you are free; therefore do not offend the Lord, by going contrary to what you believe, honestly and after thought and prayer, to be right. But above all, do not say that because your brother does not see things just as you do in the political field, he necessarily is wrong. I was very much touched by the president's words—that he was pained at the evidence that had come to view, that some brethren condemn their fellows because these do not look on things as those of the first class do in matters political. Our religion should purify our politics, and make us honest, tolerant, and bold, to do that which is required of citizens, and to exercise our

rights at the polls. Our religion should make us honest in business, truthful in all our doings. To be so is to be in line with the keeping of the commandments of the Lord. I pray that this may continue to be a characteristic of the Latter-day Saints, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

I always find it very difficult to reach a conclusion as to how I should best occupy my allotment of time on these occasions. I think I have been more perplexed than usual at this time to know what I ought to say, in an attempt to make some contribution to the great conference that we are now holding. I desire to say nothing that is inconsonant with the splendid remarks that have already been made, and with the excellent spirit that has here prevailed. I feel, as Brother Whitney expressed himself, to give over my thought to some matters that have been more or less weighing upon my mind; and while I may not be able to give solutions to some of the problems that I see confronting us, I sincerely hope, with the aid of our Father's Spirit, to be able to present to you some questions which I believe deserve our serious consideration.

THE "WORLD" HAS BROUGHT A TRANSFORMATION AMONG US

May I, by way of premise, go back a few years in the history of the Church? Not many years ago the various communities of the Church, that is, the communities in which the Latter-day Saints dwelt, were made up almost exclusively of members of the Church. I think that not more, perhaps, than twenty-five or thirty years ago would have found our villages and our small towns, outside of the few large centers in this intermountain region, to be peopled almost entirely with members of our Church. These villages, these country towns, while all under the jurisdiction of the civil government and all functioning as municipalities, were nevertheless so exclusively made up of people all professing one religious faith, that necessarily there was a unity of expression in matters of social intercourse, particularly, that was very marked. Nearly all of the activities in the societies that then prevailed were carried on under the jurisdiction of Church government. Our wards, being small centers of population, so formed as to make feasible and practical the administration of social affairs and functions, were under the jurisdiction of their bishops, and our people responded almost with unanimous accord to the direction and the influence exercised by the Church in these various communities. We were homogeneous.

With the passing of years a very different condition has come to prevail. In the larger centers of the Church people whom we sometimes designate as "outsiders" have come to be, in numbers, in the