

ELDER JOHN WELLS*(Of the Presiding Bishopric)*

While listening to the advice we have received during this conference. I thought of that passage of scripture: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior," for I do rejoice that we are permitted to meet here in such pleasant surroundings and under such auspicious circumstances, blessed with the privilege of listening to instruction and advice given by our brethren, under the inspiration of the Lord. I realize what a blessing it is to have this privilege. What a glorious blessing it is to feel the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, under which we make new resolves and determinations to better serve the Lord. There is something in "Mormonism," commonly so-called, or the gospel of Jesus Christ, that forces every one of us, when under its influence, to think better, to act better and to make new resolves.

We have been told to hold the gospel's standards high; to keep the commandments of the Lord; to pay our tithes and offerings; and to remember the poor. All of these instructions, if carried out, will develop in our hearts the spirit of unselfishness and devotion to our fellow men. No one can perform a good act or a service for the Lord but what he rids himself of some selfishness. I often meditate on the great commandment given by our Lord and Master: "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." This commandment is practically the sum and substance of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and His great work will roll forward just in proportion to the measure that we grasp that fact and live it. We cannot possibly separate the love of God from the love of fellow men. The more we love God, and the more we try to serve Him, the more we shall love our fellow men; and the more we shall desire to labor for our Master. We cannot separate our religion into two parts, to be forgotten in worldly affairs and to be remembered on the Sabbath day only. Every Latter-day Saint who has in his heart a desire to love God and to keep His commandments, must, at the same time, love his fellow men, and this great body of Latter-day Saints demonstrate, as no other people on this earth have done, the force and power behind the great commandment of our Lord and Master, and the sacrifice and labors of the Latter-day Saints for the love of their fellow men. This is almost beyond comprehension.

When I listened to the President give out the report of temple work, I thought to myself: "It would take a thousand years for one person to do all the work that has been done in the temples for the dead in one year." Then, when we remember the twenty-five thousand ward teachers who visit the homes of the Latter-day Saints every month, going in humility of heart with a message—not a scolding or

fault-finding—but a message of uplift, of love, of kindness and of helpfulness; we realize what service and love of our fellow man means. Then, there are the sisters of the Relief Society, acting as visiting teachers, going from home to home, laboring week in and week out, gathering small funds for the poor and for other social purposes, leaving their blessing, their sympathy, and the influence of the Spirit of the Lord in the homes they visit. Then, we must remember the seventy thousand brethren in the Church, holding offices in the Priesthood, from patriarch to deacon, who are trying to exercise the Priesthood given unto them to teach others by example and by precept the gospel of our Lord and Master. Our critics are still groping about to find fault with the work of the Lord. They will not lift up their heads to see the good we are doing. They are very much like the picture I saw in my early days in an edition of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which an angel stood over a man in poverty who was raking the gutters with a muck rake, trying to find something valuable there, while there stood over him the angel who had a crown for him if he would only look up for it. The world is in the same condition today in relation to the Latter-day Saints. They have not made up their minds that good can come from Nazareth, after all.

My brethren and sisters, we must be prepared to give sweetness, kindness and helpfulness and to develop the highest type of community life among the Latter-day Saints. By this I do not mean the cooperative movement that prevails in the world, by which one great organization, under the name of cooperation, is developing this movement through stores, for the movement is nothing more than a protest against their competitors, and is still the competitive system of living. Such methods only aggravate the class distinction that is growing so pronounced. The cooperation the Latter-day Saints should have is that of sympathy and love, kindness and helpfulness, improvement of homes, farms, and all working with that ideal of the common good in mind, with that neighborly spirit that is so well understood among the Latter-day Saints. This spirit of helpfulness in community life will rid us of our selfishness, whether it be commercial or otherwise.

My brethren and sisters, let us pay our tithes and offerings, and let us remember the poor; let us have sympathy for those less fortunate than ourselves, and let this sympathy be of a practical kind; let sweet neighborliness grow in our communities, for, after all, a sweet home life is the greatest help to the community. I was examining the United States census a few days ago. It shows that a majority of the people of the United States live in the great centers of population. The drift, all through the United States, is toward the cities. We are not growing in the cities, but we are growing in our semi-rural and farming communities. We are growing in our little towns and hamlets, where the sweetest home life and the finest development take place.

May the Lord bless us that we may magnify our callings, honor our Priesthood, serve Him with full purpose of heart, and all other things will be added to us. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, "Come, come, ye Saints."

ELDER DAVID A. SMITH

(Of the Presiding Bishopric)

I am sure that as good as President Grant is with figures, he would have a difficult problem in trying to determine how much blood my heart has pumped during this day, and judging from the feeling that came over me when my name was mentioned, the first two seconds, my blood was pumped to a froth.

I remember, a number of years ago while on the train, listening to a discussion between President Lorenzo Snow, President George Q. Cannon and President Joseph F. Smith. They were discussing their missionary experiences and trials that had come to them in their missionary work. To my surprise at that time, they agreed that the hardest thing they had to do was to occupy this position. Having listened to each of them preach wonderful sermons, I could not understand how this could be, but I can now say that I have lived to appreciate, in a modest way, their feelings, and I believe I have learned that it is a virtue to be desired rather than avoided. For I have discovered that when a man acts in and of himself, in his own strength, he makes mistakes, but when God acts, he makes no mistakes, and He has promised His children that if they humble themselves before Him, His blessings will attend them, and I have found in my short experience nothing that will humble one so effectively as being called to this position.

Merciful and gracious is the Lord, and marvelous is His work. Blessed, indeed, are those of us who have been permitted to take upon us His name, and covenant with Him through the waters of baptism that we are willing to serve Him, that we appreciate the opportunity He has given unto us of again returning into His presence, to enjoy the blessings promised the faithful. While I attended a convention in the East a few years ago, this statement was made:

"Our experience in Europe with the army has taught us that today the people have no love for the old conventional religion. Instead there are selfishness and pettiness. We must do away with the false social distinctions and create a church ideal, fit for our present need, one with social aims worth fighting for, not a mere selfish gospel of safety. Let them lift up the center faiths of the Christian life, let them practice as well as preach fraternity, and draw together in one common cause."

I want to say to you that in God's Church we have a perfect fra-