

LET US NOT CHANGE OUR BLESSINGS FOR FOOLISH ATTRACTIONS.

My brethren and sisters, I am thankful for my membership in this Church. I am grateful to be permitted to have the companionship of my brethren and sisters. I prize my citizenship in this great nation, and from the depths of my soul I am thankful that my lot has been cast with you. This great government was established by our Father, this land was prepared by him, and the particular part of it that is inhabited by the Latter-day Saints has been beautified until the eyes of the world are turned towards us, because of the picturesqueness and the grandeur of the home that the Lord has prepared for us. He has blessed us with all this and with every comfort, with the loving companionship and association of wives and husbands and parents and children and the presidency of the Priesthood of our Lord. Let us not be blinded by the cunning of the adversary to exchange any of these wonderful gifts for the foolishness that attracts mankind, for the pitfalls that have been prepared by the enemy of all righteousness. This is our Father's work, this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is the power of God unto salvation to all those who believe and obey it, and I pray that we who are here this day, may return to our homes with renewed determination to be loyal and faithful to those things that are righteous, and that we will live to honor him who gives all we enjoy, and who offers us the blessings of eternal life, eternal progress, eternal increase in his celestial kingdom. May the Lord help us to merit his blessings, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER REED SMOOT

No person who has attended the sessions of this conference is more thankful to our heavenly Father than am I. I want you, brethren and sisters, to know that whenever one of the general conferences is held, and I am unable to attend, I feel greatly the loss of it. I constantly pray to my heavenly Father that, on account of conditions that prevent me from attending the conferences, I may partake of the same spirit that is manifested through all of the speakers when I have the privilege of reading the reports.

APPRECIATION OF CONFERENCE AND THE SPEAKERS.

In standing before you this day I crave the assistance of my heavenly Father in what I may say at this conference. I trust that I may have the same degree of his spirit that has been enjoyed by all the former speakers. I have never attended conference where the testimonies had such an effect upon me, beginning with that of the President of the Church and continuing with every speaker that followed him. My soul and spirit said: "Amen" to the many truths uttered, and to the testimonies borne. I have heard President Grant bear his testimony to his knowledge of this gospel many times. I have

heard him speak since he has been President of the Church, but never in my life have I been impressed with the power that he exercises, through the gift of God, as in his opening address at this conference. As President Penrose stood upon this stand, a servant who has declared the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ for seventy-two years, I believe, even before any of the other General Authorities of the Church were born, and with the power that he exercised, granted to him by God; and the truths that were uttered rang through my soul, and I thanked God for such men.

CONDITIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

Much has been said at this conference as to the conditions existing in the world, based upon the predictions of the prophets of the living God. It called to my attention the fact that on July 27, this year, Brother John A. Widtsoe and I were in Sweden, and at that time the great Baptist congress or conference of the Baptist churches in all the world was held there, and an account of the meetings held upon that day was cabled to the *New York Times*. I am going to take the time now to read from the *New York Times* of July 28, this year, a report of that particular meeting. It is dated, Stockholm, July 27:

"The Christian church has no message today for a dying world. As a matter of fact, the Christian church is preaching many gospels, and the result is confusion and failure," said the Reverend Doctor Curtis Lee Laws, of Brooklyn, in addressing the Baptist World Alliance here today. "Audiences are being rent asunder today," he said, "and those who have long been brethren are in warring camps contending, not only over non-essentials, but also over the very fundamental principles of Christianity. If this theological war is fought to a finish," he said, "at least the present generation will perish for lack of vision. Believing in the sincerity and high moral character of these theologians, I beg of them, in the name of Christ and perishing humanity, that they will quietly and lovingly gather about the table with God's book before them and let them settle every disputed question. That book is the ultimate ground for authority."

A MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD

I might add, my brethren and sisters, that there is a message in the world today for all its peoples. God has revealed to his servants the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was given through his servants, as a message to the world, and humble as our missionaries may be in presenting that message to the world, dying, as the minister has already said, for want of a message, if it were heeded by the world today, existing conditions could not be as they are. It is true that there is a suffering world, it is true that there are dissensions among all the sects of the world, it was true when God spoke to the Prophet Joseph, calling his particular attention to it, and it will be true until the world accepts the message that God has given in this last dispensation of the fulness of time. Ridicule, my brethren and sisters, is not going to change that message, and the mere fact that someone says that in this enlightened age, the people of this dispensation, in this day of under-

standing and enlightenment, will never believe that the Angel Moroni appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and that he did deliver the golden plates to him, just as the Prophet testified.

THE PROBABILITY OF ITS TRUTH

Mere ridicule of such a statement does not make it untrue. Is it any more difficult to believe that an angel from heaven did just as the Prophet Joseph stated, deliver those plates to him and usher in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as practically every prophet in every dispensation has predicted—is it any more difficult to believe that than for the world's Christian people to believe the Bible? Isn't it just as probable, if they want to use that word, as when Moses is credited with the power conferred upon him by God, to have the waters of the Red Sea divide and the people of Israel go across dry-shod, is there any more mystery about one than there is about the other? If God's power with Elijah could enable him to stand upon the banks of the Jordan and smite the waters of the river and cause them to divide hither and thither, and he cross over dry-shod, isn't it just as probable, even to a skeptic, that the truth, as delivered by the Prophet Joseph Smith, is as it occurred? There are too many recitals of incidents in the Bible that are much more miraculous than the fact that an angel from heaven showed to the boy prophet where the records were concealed.

A TRIBUTE, TO MOTHER

Together with Brother Widtsoe I had the privilege of visiting Europe during the months of July and August. While thus upon a special mission, and by the assistance of Brother Widtsoe, I had the privilege of visiting the Scandinavian countries. I also took the time during my last visit to go there, primarily, I will say, to visit my mother's old home. While a young man I used to say to mother: "Some day we will go back to the old home." I left it too late, as so many things are put off until it is too late; for my mother died when she was sixty years old. But I made up my mind that sooner or later I would go to the old home and see some of my relatives there. I haven't the time today to express to you the feelings I had when I stood upon the very spot where she was born, and when I saw the old homestead as it was. When I went into the old cow-shed and opened the old door that she had opened perhaps hundreds and hundreds of times, when I looked upon the spring back of the house, that I had heard her speak of when I was a boy and, as I stood under the shade of that wonderful tree her mother had planted and which she used to tell me about; and as I saw conditions surrounding that homestead, I want to say to you, my brethren and sisters, I thanked God from the bottom of my heart that the gospel of Jesus Christ reached my mother, and that she knew it was true, when she was but a girl. All opposition and all persecution on the part of her father and her mother and her loved ones never had one iota of influence upon her testimony that God lived and that Jesus is the Christ.

A YOUNG CONVERT'S TELLING TESTIMONY

My cousins brought to me the old family Bible, and as I lifted the lid I saw a writing and at the bottom of the last page of it the name "Anna Kirstine Mauritz-datter." I could not read the writing, but I asked Brother Widtsoe to copy it as quickly as possible, then tell me what was in it. I desired to have it translated word for word. It was a message to her parents written on the day that she left home—the day she was driven from home by a loving father and mother who thought that she would not be gone very long, but that she would soon return and ask forgiveness, and deny that she knew that God lived and that Jesus is the Christ. She was only a girl, then, but I am going to take time now to read to this congregation, that letter, because it gives forth the spirit that makes women such as she. It is filled full of the spirit of our fathers and mothers who were willing to sacrifice all in this world for the gospel's sake; aye, it is the spirit of a missionary, teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was written in her own hand-writing, and it was the last farewell of a girl who loved her country, who loved her father and mother, and who loved her home, but who loved the gospel of Jesus Christ more:

"A few words from your daughter Kirstine, Dear, my parents: Pray God for courage to accept this great truth contained in this book and now restored, so that rejected knowledge may not be a testimony against you on God's great day to come. I pray God that on that great day we may be able to gather together in joy and happiness, and that we may then be crowned to God's glory, and that he may say to us all: 'Come now, my faithful children, you shall be rewarded for your labors.' This matter, and my desire that you may know the truth and accept it, have made me shed in secret many burning tears, and they have been increased when I have thought of the ungodliness of mankind. The years are speeding on, the day is approaching when all must listen to the Shepherd and render obedience to his will, or receive punishment. The great King is coming to reign and to rule. Sin and evil will be banished. May God grant that you may be among the worthy ones. My heart grows tender when I think of these things. God give that all mankind may repent. I shall pray to my heavenly Father that all who read these lines may comprehend the true purpose of his holy book, and may lay down the burden of sin. That which I have written is for all who may read these lines. I pray God to lead you into eternal life.

"Kirstine Mauritz-datter, Drammen, Sept. 1, 1854."

NOT ASHAMED ANYWHERE OF THE RESTORED GOSPEL OF CHRIST

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ; I am not ashamed of the testimony of the mother that gave me birth. I care not where I go upon the face of the earth, whether it be with kings, potentates, or any class of people in the world, I want them all to know that I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I pray God that I may have strength to do those things that he wants me to do, to say those things that he wants me to say, to live in a way that he wants me to live, and bear a testimony of his truth and of his work, that will be worthy of a man who comes from a mother such as I had.

THE BURDEN OF WAR THE RESULT OF THE BURDEN OF SIN

Yes, the burden of sin today, the cause of the World war, and the

resulting burdens of debt, are on the backs of the people of Europe, and if they are fortunate enough to live, and if there is peace in the world for another hundred years, they will not entirely remove the burdens that have been placed upon them as a result of the world war.

Let me cite you a case: Take England, with her forty-five millions of people. I mean Great Britain and Ireland, not all of her colonies nor any of them. What do we find? Forty-five millions of people carrying a burden of over eight hundred dollars for every man, woman and child. We find the average tax imposed upon them equal to one hundred and two dollars every year, for every man, woman and child. We find that the costs of the last war, to England, were more than the maintaining of the British government for two hundred and twenty-six years, including all former wars. We find hardly a home in all England but what there came, through that war, the death of one or more of the family. We find unrest even there, and I want to say now to the good people here that I pray God that the time never will come when the English speaking peoples of the world will become enemies. I never want to see a conflict between England and America; for if it ever comes, just as surely as God lives, the English speaking peoples of the world will not thereafter control the destinies of the world.

WORLD CAN BE SAVED ONLY BY A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THE USE OF
COMMON SENSE

I have started, my brethren and sisters, upon a subject that will take too much time. I bear you my testimony that this is the work of God, and the only thing, it seems to me, that will save the world today is to acknowledge God and use good common sense. I hope and trust that the members of the Church will be even more willing to serve God than they have been in the past. Look to your homes, my brethren and sisters. See that the home is made the place where all in it will thank God for his many mercies, and are willing to acknowledge his hand in all things. May God bless not only our people here, but bless all the peoples of the world, and, as we often pray, hasten the day when Zion shall be redeemed, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

(President of the Central States Mission.)

I do not know that I have ever attended a conference when I have felt more of the Spirit of the Lord and the power of testimony than in this conference; and I trust that I may enjoy a continuation of God's Holy Spirit and be led to say that which he would have me say at this time.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is growing and will continue to grow until it fills the earth. Daniel, a prophet of God, made such a prediction, and it will not fail for God's word has