

THIRD DAY

MORNING SESSION

Conference opened Sunday morning at 10 o'clock, April 6, 1924. All the seats in the tabernacle were occupied and every available standing space in the building. Many were unable to gain admission. Through a radio device many who were gathered at the Bureau of Information and at the Barratt Hall, listened through radio instruments to the proceedings. Besides, in the Assembly Hall, there was an overflow meeting at which Elder W. A. Hyde of the Pocatello stake presided.

The choir and congregation sang, "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

Elder Moroni Lazenby, president of the North Sevier stake, offered the opening prayer.

A duet and chorus was rendered by the choir and Mary Lindsay and Cannon Lund, entitled, "An angel from on high."

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

I cannot express to you, my brethren and sisters, the gratitude that I feel to our heavenly Father, and the joy which I experience as I look upon this great congregation of Latter-day Saints who have assembled in general conference to hear the word of the Lord. It is a renewed evidence to me that as the work of the Lord draws nearer its consummation, the invisible forces of the spirit world are operating upon the hearts of the people, drawing them nearer together, uniting them in faith, and preparing them for the great events which are before us, even at our very doors.

THE MULTITUDE COMPARED WITH AN ANCIENT GATHERING

As we stood up for the opening hymn, I thought of these words which are recorded in the Book of Mormon. King Benjamin had sent out an invitation to the Nephite people to gather together at the temple in the land of Zarahemla. When they assembled it was discovered that the temple was not large enough to contain all of the people, so he ordered a tower erected upon the outside, that he might address them from that spot. But still the people could not hear; so many had assembled. So he ordered that the words which he spoke be written and distributed among them, in order that they might all know the things which he was about to declare. This house is filled to overflowing with people. The Assembly Hall is

full, and there are still multitudes upon the outside who cannot be accommodated in either of these buildings.

PROCEEDINGS OF A CHARACTER TO STIMULATE FAITH

The entire proceedings of the conference, my brethren and sisters, have been of a character, I am sure, to stimulate faith, to cause our minds to revert to the simple but fundamental doctrines of the gospel by which we are kept in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord.

AUTHORITY CONFERRED UPON THE APOSTLES

I thought yesterday, as the meetings progressed, of these words which are recorded here in the last chapter of St. Matthew :

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

"And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted" (for this was after his resurrection from the dead).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

It was the last sentence, expressed in these words of the Redeemer, to which my attention was particularly drawn, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." and if they do this, "Lo, I am with you unto the end of the world."

Two years prior to the time when this commission was given, the Redeemer had called to him the Twelve Disciples whom he had chosen, and instructed them to go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, and declared to them that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. They were to go, putting their trust in the Lord, with the promise that he would protect them, would provide food and clothing and deliver them from the hands of enemies, who might seek to harm them.

At the time of his appearance to the Nephites, after his resurrection from the dead, the Redeemer called twelve men upon whom he conferred authority to call the people to repentance and faith in him, and to baptize all who believed, for the remission of sins, after which he promised them the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

LIKE AUTHORITY CONFERRED UPON THE TWELVE IN OUR DAY

It is quite natural, then, and in harmony with the well-defined order of the Church, that with the restoration of the work of the Lord in the dispensation in which we live, twelve men should be chosen upon whom the apostleship was conferred, and to whom the command of the Lord was renewed; for he commanded these twelve: to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, who had not received it, baptizing them in the name of the Father

and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and conferring upon the baptized believer, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands.

So important are these first principles of the gospel that in the early days of the Church the Lord commanded Martin Harris that he should preach nothing else.

THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

Initiation into the Church is an event of tremendous importance, to one who accepts it. So important was it regarded in the primitive Church that we are told that the ordinance of baptism was administered to none except those who took upon them the name of Christ, with a determination to serve him, and came forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, manifesting to the Church that they had truly repented of all of their sins. To one who has thus prepared himself, the ordinance of baptism washes away his sins, and he is born to newness of life. He stands clean before the Lord, an heir to glory, exaltation and eternal life—not definitely, but conditionally; for in exchange for this priceless gift he enters into covenant that he will take upon him in the name of Christ, and always remember him and keep the commandments which he has given. If we violate this covenant, it were better never to have made it.

To be admitted into the Church, then, is but to have our feet placed in the straight and narrow path which, if we diligently pursue our way, will lead us back to God from whence we came. Having been born to newness of life, Latter-day Saints should lay off the habiliments of the carnal man, and clothe themselves in robes of righteousness, that is to say, our mode of life should correspond, in all respects, with our profession of faith.

TO BE IN POSSESSION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD WE MUST PRAY

In order that we may retain a remission of our sins, it is necessary that we be constantly in possession of the Spirit of the Lord, and the medium through which we obtain and retain his Spirit is prayer. Prayer is the outward act by which we manifest our faith in the Lord. It is not the multiplicity of words which are uttered, that brings the desired blessings, but the degree of faith with which we approach our Father who is in heaven. It is mockery to pray to a being in whose power to hear and answer we have no faith, as I have often thought that some men do today. The Lord, referring to this subject, warned us that when we pray we are not to be like the hypocrites who love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets that they may be heard of men, nor to use vain repetition, thinking to be heard for our much speaking, neither are public prayers alone sufficient, important though they are in their time and place, but we are admonished that we should pray in secret, and the definite promise is made that the prayer of faith, so offered, shall be rewarded openly.

HUMILITY SHOULD CHARACTERIZE OUR CONDUCT

The doctrine of humility, taught in this lesson given us by the Redeemer, should characterize the conduct of Latter-day Saints in all of the activities of life, for he has told us that we should be clothed upon with humility, for God resists the proud and giveth grace to the humble. And he tells us that as we wax stronger in humility, we become firmer in the faith unto the filling of our souls with joy.

Latter-day Saints should seek wisdom and learn the value of righteousness and justice; they should patiently submit to persecution when it is for righteousness sake, be slow to anger, quick to forgive, merciful, but always just. They should be peacemakers constantly striving both by precept and example to bring to pass the universal brotherhood of man.

GOOD WILL AND FORGIVENESS FUNDAMENTAL

It is fundamental to the faith of all creeds that man should not take the life of his fellow. The Redeemer went further than this, teaching that he who is angry with his brother will not be held guiltless. He taught us that when differences arise between brethren, they should be settled quickly, and when once adjusted, are not to be the subject of further discussion or comment; that we should be men and women of few words, reaching conclusions quickly, but wisely, as circumstances may justify; making our decision yes or no, and let that be the end of controversy.

The law of Moses taught the doctrine of retaliation for wrong inflicted. The Master teaches that we are not to resist evil, but patiently submit to the offences of others, that we should not only love our friends, but our enemies also; that we should bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us—a thing not easy of accomplishment; but nevertheless a direct commandment, and one which brings to the soul of those who apply it the satisfaction of a righteous act performed.

EXERCISE CHARITY WITHOUT OSTENTATION

In this age of organized charity, when the contributions which we make to provide for the necessities of those who have not, are advertised to the world, and we love to be known as liberal givers, it is well to turn again to the word of the Lord, for he has told us that when we give alms we are to see to it that it be not before men, to be seen of them, otherwise we have no reward of our Father which is in Heaven; that we are not to sound a trumpet before us as the hypocrites do, that we may have the honors of men, but that we, when we give alms, are not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth. In other words, the alms which we give should be contributed for the love of giving, and with desire to administer to the necessities of others, rather than for the praise of men. It was this, my

brethren and sisters, which made the widows mite more acceptable to the Lord than all that others had cast into the treasury.

SEEK WISDOM AND NOT WEALTH

Having become members of the Church, taking upon us the name of Christ, acknowledging our dependence upon him and entering into covenant that we will serve him and keep his commandments, the Lord has told us that we are not to devote our energies to the accumulation of wealth, that we shall not seek after riches, but after wisdom, and those things which bring eternal blessings; for he says that riches and the honors which men bestow will canker the soul, if not used for the glory of God, and that the lament of the rich, who have not used their wealth for the accomplishment of good, will be: "The harvest is over, the summer is passed, and our souls are not saved." Neither will poverty in itself bring blessings. It is the poor who are reconciled to their lot, and the rich who are poor in spirit, with whom the Lord is well pleased. He has admonished us that we are not to devote our energies to the accumulation of wealth for this reason, that we cannot devotedly and acceptably serve two Masters. He says that we will either neglect one or the other. We cannot faithfully, as we should, serve both God and Mammon. Therefore he admonishes us that we should lay up treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break in and steal.

BE SLOW TO RENDER JUDGMENT AND CRITICISM

The Lord has plainly told us that we should be wise and judicious, that we should be slow to render judgment or criticism of our fellows; for he has told us that with the judgment which we mete out to others, we ourselves will be judged. How often, how readily, we detect and magnify the faults of our neighbors, while we overlook our own imperfections. How often we seek to pull the mote from the eye of our brother, and forget the beam which is in our own. "Therefore," saith the Lord, "judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive and ye shall be forgiven." In other words, whatsoever ye would that men shall do unto you, do ye even so unto them—an admonition of the Lord, carrying with it one of the most sublime principles ever uttered by the tongue of man.

FAST WITH CHEERFUL COUNTENANCE

Fasting is a doctrine of the Church. Here again the Lord has told us that when we fast we are not to be as the hypocrites who disfigure their faces, that they may appear to the world to fast; but we are to wash our faces and with cheerful countenance appear to men not to fast; and the definite promise is made that the Lord, who seeth in secret, will reward us openly.

HONOR MARRIAGE; BE CHASTE AND VIRTUOUS

The marital relations of the world,—and to a certain degree it applies to the Church—were referred to yesterday by Bishop Nibley. Here again is a matter which is deserving of our most careful attention and consideration. The fountains of life, designed by the Creator for the reproduction of humankind, and sacred to the marital relation only, are made the plaything of faithless, godless men and women. The holy bonds of matrimony, the only order which gives proper sanction to the association of the sexes, is entered into and dissolved at will. These conditions are, in my opinion, the most dangerous menaces to our national life which exists today. The Lord pleads with us to honor the association of man and woman in lawful wedlock, and makes plain to us the penalties which are attached to the violation of laws of chastity and virtue, both in this life and that to come, and appeals to us that we shall observe these laws, which are the crown of matrimony, and should be held by us as sacred as life itself.

WHY THESE SIMPLE DOCTRINES SHOULD BE IMPLICITLY OBSERVED

I have referred to these simple, but indispensable doctrines of the Church, because it appears necessary to me to do so. We are living in the day referred to by the Prophet Isaiah, who said that the nations should rush as the rushing of mighty waters, but God would rebuke them.

I sometimes fear, my brethren and sisters, that in this mad rush for wealth, for power, for personal aggrandizement, this age of dishonesty in high places, disregard for law, and indifference to virtue, and religion, that we may be caught in the swirling flood and carried on to destruction unless we revert to those simple but fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and put our trust in the Lord, renewing our covenants with him, that his arm may sustain us.

We are living at the time seen by Lehi, the Nephite prophet, when, because of the darkness, which covered the earth, many people who had entered into the straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life, as we have done, lost their way and perished. But those who seized and held fast to the rod of iron, which is the word of God, found their way safely through the dark night until they reached the tree of life, and partook of its fruit, which is more desirable than all others.

WARNING AGAINST BECOMING LIKE THE PHARISEES OF OLD . .

The commission given to the Twelve who hold the apostleship today is to go into the world and preach the gospel to all people, admonishing them to rely upon the merits of our Father, to take upon them the name of Christ and to keep all of the commandments which he has given, to only a few of which I have called your attention. We must not my brethren and sisters become so absorbed with the temporalities of life, with the weighty and abstruse doctrines

of the gospel, that we forget these simple and fundamental doctrines of the Church to which I have called your attention, lest we become like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, of whom the Redeemer said: "Ye diligently pay your tithes and offerings, but ye forget the more weighty things of the law, judgment, justice and mercy. These," he said, "you should have kept and not left the others undone."

REMEMBER THESE SIMPLE, FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

May the Lord help us all, my brethren and sisters, for I am speaking to myself as well as to you, to remember these simple fundamental doctrines of the gospel of Christ, that our lives may be such that the Spirit of the Lord may abide with us, and the revelations of heaven be manifested to us through the whispering of the Holy Spirit, which has been conferred upon every one of us, the office work of which is to take the things of the Father and make them known to us, that we may each discharge with honor before the Lord the obligations which are upon us, and wait patiently the development of his work, that we may bring to pass the redemption of his covenant people, the establishment of righteousness in the earth, when Christ shall reign triumphant among his people, is my humble prayer, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

President Grant announced to the congregation outside that it would be acceptable if they would be as quiet as possible and move around as little as possible so that those who were standing at the Bureau of Information could hear the speakers.

ELDER HYRUM G. SMITH

(Presiding Patriarch of the Church)

It is a wonderful opportunity to stand here and face this multitude of people, and I am sure some of you realize that it is a wonderful responsibility. I hope to enjoy the Spirit of the Lord the few moments I stand here, in keeping with the brethren who have already occupied this position. I have learned, to a certain degree, the weight of responsibility that has come to me as one of the youths of Israel, one of the young men of Zion, in these the last days.

President Ivins has been speaking to us concerning the commandments of the Lord, and how these commandments have been taught to us of the Lord, at different times in the history of the world. We are aware of the fact that the Lord has spoken to us in plainness, and that his commandments are given to us in our own language, simple, plain and forceful, and yet many of us are so blinded by the conditions that surround us, perhaps by the fashions of the world, with which we are surrounded, that we fail in many ways to keep the commandments of the Lord. I suppose, my experience has given