

to tempt us, or direct us into evil paths, and that we may listen to the whisperings of that still small voice, to which all good men are entitled, and know that voice when it shall come to us, for it will point us the way of peace and happiness and eternal life, is my prayer, and that God may grant it to us all, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN WELLS

Of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church

I have listened with a great deal of pleasure and appreciation to the remarks that have been made yesterday and today. They have been a source of joy to my soul, and I appreciate most sincerely this opportunity of being present to listen to the words of life, of counsel, and of advice that have been given already and will yet be given during this conference.

This vast congregation is unique. It is composed not of delegates whose expenses have been paid by organizations that they might come to attend these sessions, but is made up of Latter-day Saints who of their own free will have assembled in this great building for the purpose of worshipping God and for the purpose of being blessed and inspired by truth and a fuller understanding of the Gospel. They have assembled from places all the way between Canada and Mexico, as far southeast as Georgia, northeast up to New York and vicinity, from Chicago and from such western states as California, and from points as far west as the Hawaiian Islands. They have gathered here for the purpose of listening to words of inspiration and of being encouraged in their holy faith. So, in that respect, this gathering is unique; and I am thankful and glad that I am privileged to be one who is here.

While Brother George Albert Smith was speaking I thought to myself, "What more am I thankful for than those things which he has expressed this morning?" I am thankful, as I believe we all are, for the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; for the kind and tender mercy of our Father in heaven in giving us the privilege in these latter days of hearing and embracing the truth, as revealed from our heavenly Father to his servant the Prophet Joseph. I am thankful, and I think that we all are thankful, for this goodly land, for this land choice above all other lands, protected by two mighty oceans from Old World hatreds and feuds, this land where there can be developed the highest civilization the world has yet seen. I am thankful that the Lord has so abundantly blessed his people. Though adversity brought that Pioneer band here, he himself placed them in the center of this great country, in the valleys of these great mountain ranges, where wealth and peace and comfort prevail; and how different we find the world to be when we leave these vales and these peaceful towns and villages of the Latter-day Saints, and how glad we are to get back again. I

am thankful that the Lord has reserved this land as the place in which his mighty purposes were to be brought about, that the Gospel was restored in a land where liberty prevails. These happenings were not haphazard; they did not come by chance. The Prophet Nephi saw in vision the very man who would discover this land and prepare the way for the coming of the great stream of the House of Israel into this country, which has been occupied, and is still being occupied and deve'oped, by that mighty race of Israelites scattered as they were years ago, and remaining so until the sound of the Gospel message came to them.

I am thankful, too, for the peace that prevails among us as Latter-day Saints; for the happiness and comfort which abide about us; for the well-fed and well-clothed people; for the comfortable homes and beautiful surroundings of the farms and the property which the Lord has permitted us to acquire that we might use it to his honor and glory. It was with joy, too, that I heard this morning the reading of the statement made by the Prophet Joseph concerning our rights and privileges; and I am thankful that among the fruits of the Gospel is the demonstration that people can live in harmony and in peace. While one Latter-day Saint committing a felony would be one too many, yet there is no community in this world where less crime is committed and where there is less need for courts of justice and order than in the communities where our people are thickly settled. Such are the results of obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I am indeed thankful for it.

Another thought concerning the progress and development of the work of God: The Lord has given us the light of the Gospel, and a part of the responsibility of continuing his great work rests upon us. As I said to Bishop Nibley this morning, the Lord has placed upon the Latter-day Saints three great duties. One is that they shall save themselves; another, that they shall warn the world; and the third, that they shall redeem their dead; and nearly all we do in this Church is fundamentally based on one or more of these three propositions.

I have been thinking concerning our personal salvation, the development of our spiritual life, increased devotion to duty in our wards and stakes, the higher and better family life; for after all family life is the basis of all the development of this Church. We are an aggregate of families organized into branches and wards and stakes and missions, and we need development in the home, the basis of all our growth and improvement. I would like to see scripture reading in the homes, and family prayers carefully attended to, that the spirit and idealism of the Gospel of Jesus Christ might be instilled into us in the home, for that is where we will save ourselves and our children. In this Church the Lord has placed the priesthood to act as his agents, that whatever they perform, in righteousness and under the proper direction, will be binding on this earth and in the heavens. This priesthood has been graded into various orders, each with very specific and

well-defined duties, and the Lord called and appointed two of the orders of this priesthood for the very purpose of looking after the home life of the community. The Lord shows this in Section 20, that famous and wonderful revelation given a short time before the Church was organized, and he placed upon the priests and teachers these duties:

"The priest's duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament,

"And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties. * * *

"The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them:

"And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, back-biting, nor evil speaking;

"And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all members do their duty."

The Lord did not intend that it should be left entirely with the priests and teachers. In section 107, he says:

"High priests after the order of the Melchizedek Priesthood have a right to officiate in their own standing, under the direction of the presidency, in administering spiritual things, and also in the office of an elder, priest (of the Levitical order), teacher, deacon, and member."

So, it is plain that the Lord has placed some responsibility upon every Latter-day Saint holding the Priesthood, and one of the greatest of these responsibilities I have just mentioned, that of developing the spiritual life of the Latter-day Saints; and it is a privilege to be called by the bishopric of a ward to labor in the ministry over a few families, to visit with them, to teach them, as the Lord says, and to be their counselors. It is an opportunity that comes to but few. It is the only organization in the Church by which the Lord has provided that those laboring in it shall go into the homes and teach the Saints their duties. I believe, my brethren and sisters, that we should take seriously our duties in this respect, feeling the weight of responsibility and realizing that the spiritual development of this Church, the upbuilding of family life, and the guiding and training of the youth of Zion depend so largely on the twenty thousand men and boys who are laboring in the ministry as Ward Teachers.

I believe the time has come when the young men called to hold the offices of priest and teacher should accompany older men, and I believe that these older men should be responsible for the spiritual training of the boys placed in their charge. This reminds me of the incident I have heard our President tell concerning that rugged Scotchman, Hamilton G. Park, a man whom I loved and revered, for I lived in the same stake as did he and learned to know and appreciate him. President Grant was called to labor as a teacher with Brother Park, and the President has often told of the times they have gone visiting together to the homes of the Saints in the Twelfth-Thirteenth ward, of the inspiration and encouragement he has received from that staunch Latter-day Saint who never deviated from his duty, Hamilton G. Park.

That same opportunity of helping to train the youth of Zion comes to you and to me, my brethren and sisters. I believe we would be derelict in our duty if, when young boys are called to labor with us older men, we did not instil into their hearts by testimony, by good conduct, by righteous living, a love of the Gospel, and a love of truth, so that they will be able to say, as President Grant has said about Hamilton G. Park, that we have been a source of encouragement and inspiration to them.

I believe that the development of this Church in the stakes and wards will evolve largely around the home. You remember that a lawyer sent to the Lord at one time and said to him: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" and the Lord told him: "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." There must grow among the Latter-day Saints a greater love and spirit of neighborliness among us; a co-operative spirit, with a desire to help one another in commercial and in other forms of business life; a willingness to be kind and considerate and helpful to our neighbors. This spirit prevails among us to a greater degree than anywhere else in the world. Every Latter-day Saint has need for the faith and help of his neighbors. Their lives and our lives will be benefited by their good conduct and by ours.

So I appeal to my brethren and sisters that we go home with the determination that our home life shall improve where necessary; that our spiritual life shall be developed through laboring in the ministry; that we will serve the Lord with all our hearts, with all our might, with all our minds, and with all our strength, that his great work may grow, that it may never be said of us that if we had been better men and women the work of the Lord might have progressed just a little faster.

The Lord bless you and me and help us to appreciate the opportunities of today. The Lord bless us with a desire that we make the best use of today. Yesterday has gone; tomorrow we may never see. May we grasp our opportunities and make the most of them, so that our Father may say to us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The Lord bless us, and help us to keep these facts and ideals before us all the days of our lives, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH W. McMURRIN

Of the First Council of Seventy, and President of the California Mission

It is a very great privilege, my brethren and sisters, to be present in this great conference of the Latter-day Saints. It is a great privilege also to have the opportunity of occupying a few moments in this