

relation to the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter times cannot pass away without fulfilment.

We are joyful in bearing witness, wherever we have opportunity, that we have been made acquainted with that message, thus revealed, and that the angel, promised by the Lord our God, has come to the earth; and upon the head of the Prophet Joseph, by holy beings, the authority and power and the commandment and direction of the Lord our God were given for the establishment of the great work to which we have given our allegiance. We call men's attention to the manner in which this work was introduced by an innocent boy falling upon his knees and pleading with the Lord for information, that his soul might be saved. Who is there that can find fault with the boy appealing to God in this manner, and the answer that was given of our Father in heaven? Men do not believe it, but we not only believe, but we know, that in answer to that prayer our Father in heaven and our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, made answer, and made the declaration that the time had come, that was spoken of by the holy prophets, in relation to the work of the latter times. That knowledge has come into our souls. It has gladdened our hearts. It has filled us with a desire and a determination to clear our skirts of the blood of all men, and to bear witness that God has sent his hand to accomplish that work, and that the work will be accomplished. May the Lord God help us to play our part therein, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER DAVID A. SMITH

*Of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church*

I am thankful this morning, my brethren and sisters, in having this opportunity of meeting with you in conference, in having fellowship with you and with these my brethren whose lives are devoted to the service of the Lord. I rejoice in the opportunity I have of laboring with you and of trying in my humble way to further the cause of the Lord. I sincerely pray that while I shall stand before you this morning he will bless and strengthen me that I may speak words of counsel and bear testimony to you of his goodness which will be acceptable unto him.

Many good things have been said to us during this conference thus far. I was thinking this morning, and I have been thinking for a number of weeks, in the few moments I have had when I could think of things other than those things which come to us in the regular course of business—I have tried to think of something that would be well to say to this congregation. I have gone home weary at night, after having had a strenuous day, and upon awaking in the morning, I have thought and read and studied, and I have been bewildered in the thought of approaching this task. Not that the task is burdensome to me, but that, as I serve, the field of service opens

up so broad and appears to me so big, I wonder if I will ever be equal to it!

When Brother George Albert Smith was speaking of the government of the United States, my mind turned to the government of the Church. How well has God provided for the government of his Church, and for the training of his children. My particular duty in the Church does not take me especially to the outsiders; that is, to those who do not believe as I believe; but my labor is more particularly with the members of the Church, the Lesser Priesthood, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel, which gospel is the gospel of repentance, and baptism, by immersion, for the remission of sins. One of the first commandments given by God to Adam was that he be baptized and that he teach his children to be baptized. Adam asked: "Why is it that men should be baptized?" and the Lord's answer was that, "all men must repent and be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins in the name of mine Only Begotten, the only name under heaven by which man might be saved."

This preparatory gospel is the field of service in which I am called to labor, and I rejoice in it. As I labor, from day to day, I see in it great responsibility. I wonder sometimes if we who hold the Priesthood of the living God fully realize what it means to us to be so blessed. I recall that so far as we have record, this Lesser Priesthood was held anciently only by mature men. In the beginning of the Church this Priesthood was conferred upon men, but the Lord to my mind has clearly shown that it was not intended that it should be held only by mature men, but its real purpose, to my mind, is to prepare men for service in this Church. Men who enter the Church in their mature years should gain their experience through the Lesser Priesthood. Boys who are just entering into their ministry should gain their experience through this Priesthood, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel. You will recall that the keys of the ministering of angels are given to prepare for service. It is a preparatory work. This is clearly shown in section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which the Lord has defined the duties of the Priesthood. The Priest's especial duty it is to be with the Church—and I take it where the Lord said, "to be with the Church," he meant those who are faithful, those who are diligent, those who are humble and striving earnestly to keep the commandments of God. The duty of the Priest is to be with them, to preach, teach, expound, exhort and baptize, and to see that they pray vocally and in secret. The duty of the Teacher is to be with the Church; not those who are indifferent, not those who are antagonistic, but those who have faith in God and desire to help their fellowmen in their desire to learn of God and his purposes. In this office, the duty is to see that there is no iniquity in the Church, no evil speaking, no backbiting or fault-finding, but to see that the members meet together often and do their duty. The duty of the Deacon is to assist the Teacher and the Priest when-

ever occasion requires. To me, my brethren and sisters, that means this: Although in the beginning this Priesthood was conferred upon mature men, to my mind it has been given for the purpose of developing young men, or boys, as they grow and begin to gain knowledge, which knowledge is only of value to them as they can make use of it through service.

So I take it, the Lord intended that in the Church, when fully established, young men should have opportunity to serve along with the older men. So it has been decided by his servants that young men might have this opportunity. The Deacons are ordained in their tender years; no fixed time in which they should be ordained. This should be measured by their ability to serve, and their desire to serve, that they may gain experience in this work, this ministry in which outward ordinances are the field of labor. They are put to work passing the sacrament, running errands, acting as messengers doing a hundred and one things they can do, to help impress upon them the importance of service, and the importance of their position in the Church. After a few years of such service, under proper guidance, they step into the next field of labor, that of the teacher, where it is their duty to see that there is no iniquity, no evil-speaking, backbiting, or fault-finding. Can you conceive of any work that might come into the life of a boy at the age of fourteen or fifteen years that will bring to him greater protection than to have a knowledge of the fact that it is his duty to help keep the Church clean spiritually and physically?

And I take it, it is his duty at this age to visit the homes of the members, for his duty is with the Church, those who sympathize with him and know something of his problems, and have a desire to help him in his struggle in life. Think what it would mean to him to enter the homes of the members of the Church to teach these things, and in return receive the blessings of the members of these households. Then, after years of service in this work, under the guiding hand of wise men, he steps into the office of Priest where he learns to preach, teach, expound and exhort, not among those who are unfriendly and who do not believe as he believes, but among those who sympathize with him, those who realize, to a certain extent, the task that is before him and those who, guided by the Spirit of God, reach out a helping hand to lift him over that rugged road and help place him firmly upon his feet in the service of God.

This is a work, my brethren and sisters, depending upon no one individual, every one who holds the Priesthood and all who hold the Priesthood combining together in service to carry on the work of the Lord. This is a wonderful opportunity we have, and I am wondering if there isn't more we can do unitedly to carry on this great work of the Lord, to see to it that the young men in the Church are better prepared for the ministry when the time shall come for them to be called to go into the world to preach to those who are unfriendly and

do not believe as we believe. Let me call your attention to a parable given to us by the Savior:

"And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

"And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

"And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

"Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

"And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

"Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

"Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

"But and if that servant say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

"The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

"And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

"But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

I pray, my brethren and sisters, that we may be found faithful and diligent to the end, that when the time shall come for us to be called by the Master we will be found worthy of an exaltation with him. May God so bless us, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## ELDER BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS

### *Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Eastern States Mission*

Through President Joseph W. McMurrin you have heard a report from the shores of the Pacific. I feel myself particularly happy to be able to follow him so nearly by making something of a report of the work of the Lord from the Atlantic seaboard, so that you may hear this morning, and in this same meeting a report from the shores of the sea west and a report from the shores of the sea east of the land of