

## PRESIDENT CHARLES W. NIBLEY

Here is a printed card of radio instructions which reads, The speaker is to speak in a conversational tone. He must not shout, he must not get too far away from this little microphone—"Little Mike," as they call it—and he must not strike the pulpit because this fellow objects to being jarred.

The thought occurred to me that probably in a short time instructions will be given advising the speaker not to speak too loud because the natives of Australia or the natives of Africa, listening in, haven't the same kind of ear-drums as ours, and you may hurt them.

Such may be the developments of science.

## THE SAINTS BETTER UNDERSTOOD

I have been interested in the proceedings of this conference. I am delighted to see this magnificent audience, notwithstanding the rain storm. It takes more than rain to keep the Latter-day Saints from a conference. We have heard of those who criticize this work, and we have seen all through our lives the opposition that has been manifested to it. This opposition, however, is being overcome by the gradual growth and spread of intelligence and knowledge regarding us, so that we are becoming better understood and appreciated.

## PERSISTENCE OF THE CHURCH

From the very beginning the world has been at a loss to account for "Mormonism." Only the other day we had in the President's office a distinguished visitor. He said he had been at our tabernacle, enjoyed our services, noted the class of people; and what he had heard and seen, including his observation of the developments that were being made here by the Church, and the people of the Church, had impressed upon his mind the thought that there was something more to this than he had ever imagined.

In the days of the prophet, when he was laying the foundations of this great work, he had few friends indeed. On every hand he met ridicule, contumely, hatred, persecution, mobbing, tar and feathers. All through his life such was his portion and you can easily understand how painful it was to endure it. Surely he did not get much out of it in a worldly way, and yet he stood firm, and accomplished the work which the Lord gave him to do. It was said in his day: "This man Joseph Smith is something of a marvel. He is a leader. He carries people with him, but when he dies, that will be the end of 'Mormonism.'" Well, he was martyred with his brother; the Saints were driven, and a new leader—Brigham Young—took hold of the reins.

I recall very well, as a boy in Brigham City, working in the hotel, when noted travelers stayed there—railroad builders—such men as Stanford, Huntington and others of that class. I heard them discussing this very point. I was only 19 years of age, but I kept my ears open.

They marveled at the wonderful capacity of Brigham Young as a leader, but they concluded—and that rather surprised me—they concluded that when Brigham Young should die, that would be the end of the whole thing; it would all go to pieces.

Well, it will be 50 years this very year since Brigham Young died. We have had five presidents since that time, President Grant being the fifth, and still this thing called "Mormonism" persists. Not only so, but it is greater today than it ever was. It is more powerful, has more influence. It is richer, it is stronger in faith, and more potent in every way for good, for righteousness, than ever before since the day that the prophet had the first great manifestation from heaven.

#### THE POWER THAT LEADS AND GUIDES

What power is it that brings you here? I never saw a congregation like this anywhere else in the world. Religious congregations which I have attended elsewhere are very largely composed of ladies, not men. Our good sisters more naturally take to spiritual longings and spiritual life than men do. In religious circles everywhere else the ladies predominate. But look at this congregation. Here you see strong, virile, hard-headed, forward-looking, determined men. They know what they are about. They are cultured, they are well read. They have traveled as missionaries more than any other people have traveled. So that I say they are better informed, more cultured, and have had more advantages of education which comes from travel than any body of men that can be picked in any state or territory of all the United States. Hence they are not the kind of people who can be misled. They are not misinformed. On the contrary, they know what they are about.

What power, then, what mysterious power is it that has led and guided them and that still leads and guides them and holds them together as they are held? Let me tell you what it is. I will read from the book of Doctrine and Covenants, Section 84:

"And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

"Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

"And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto man in the flesh."

That is what holds these people together—the power of the priesthood. And in the administration of it we have seen and do see the power of godliness; not a form of godliness, mind you, but the power of godliness. Paul said that in the latter days men would be "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof;" but what I refer to is the power of godliness. Have you ever seen it manifested in your lives? We heard of it this morning from the leader of the Church as manifested in the healing of the sick. We see it in the temples of the Lord; we see it in the sick rooms; we see it manifested in presidencies of stakes, bishoprics of wards.

In all the leadership of the priesthood you see that same power of godliness. This is a little different from the overruling and general

power of God that is over all nations and peoples. "He hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth and fixed the bounds of their habitations." That is the overruling power of God in all nations. We can trace it readily in this nation from the days of Washington, and even before, down to the present day. The power of God is with this nation. But this power of the Priesthood, that the Lord defines in this scripture that I have read, is just a little different. It is the power of godliness, of godly lives. It is the power of godly men and godly women, through the ordinances of the Priesthood made manifest; and everyone shares in it.

#### WE HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

If I should ask you high priests, seventies, elders, priests, teachers and deacons, who hold the priesthood, to arise, it would be seen that practically every one here holds the Priesthood, which, as I have read to you, contains and holds and reveals the key of the knowledge of God. That is what the world lacks, that is what they haven't got.

President Ivins told us this morning about those people who have passed resolutions against us, and who say there is going to be a great apostasy, there is little or no tithing paid, and all that. Why, I have heard that sort of stuff all my life. It is not worth listening to. They say "These 'Mormon' people will get rid of all that foolishness, and those visions and the Book of Mormon, and prophets, and they will come over to us." Come over to you! What in the name of common sense have you to offer? Husks—merely a form of godliness—no power in it; never was, never will be. It isn't there. We are sorry for you, brothers. We would be glad to help you. We have no ill will, no ill feelings; but when you talk of our leaving what we know we have, and going over to you—oh, please don't mention it. We can say as Peter said to the Savior, when many could not stand the strong doctrine that the Savior laid down. I will quote:

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

"Then said Jesus unto the Twelve, Will ye also go away?"

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

That is what we have here—"the words of eternal life," the power of godliness made manifest to men in the flesh. Do you see that power of godliness made manifest anywhere else in the world? Look around you and see if you can find it. I haven't seen it elsewhere, but I do know it is here. I see it here every day of my life. I have seen this power made manifest in the mission field very often.

#### THE MISSIONARY AND HIS FLOCK

Only the other day I received a letter from a young missionary in a foreign country, and he told me he had often heard the elders who

returned from missions say that about the hardest part of their mission was to leave their field of labor. He said: "I never believed them, but last night we held a meeting at which Elder So and So was presiding, and now I know it is true."

This elder had been released to return home. He had built up a little branch of some twenty members in the two or three years that he had been there. They were his flock. They had partaken of his spirit. He had brought them from darkness into light. For, let me tell you, darkness covers the earth today, spiritual darkness, in the absence of the knowledge of God. People do not know it, but darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. This is a light shining in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. They do not know it, but it is here just as truly as the Savior said it would be. And so this young man, when bidding adieu to his little flock, told them how he had been called on that mission; how keenly his parents had felt to see him leave home, because of the tenderness and love in their hearts for him: how it had taken of his means very considerably to go there and stay two years and more; and what joy he had had, notwithstanding all the sacrifices, in bringing that little flock into the fold.

They had partaken of the Priesthood and the key of the knowledge of God, and now he was to leave them. They had in their hearts boundless gratitude towards him. They were in tears; he was in tears with them. That was the spirit of sacrifice and the spirit of godliness, the power of godliness, made manifest before that people. I mention this to show that it exists in the mission field and here at home, where we work for it, just as strongly as it ever did in the history of the Church.

#### THE PRIESTHOOD THE POWER THAT LEADS

Let me read just another portion of this same revelation. By the way, this revelation was given in 1832, when some of the first elders had returned from short missions and were telling of this very kind of experience to the prophet, and he inquired of the Lord and received this revelation:

"For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling (don't forget that, brethren), are sanctified by the spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.

"They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

"And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;

"For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

"And he that receiveth me receiveth my father;

"And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

"And this according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

"Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved."

That is the power that leads and governs this Church, if the people want to know it. That is what brings you here; that is what holds you together. That is what impels us to go on missions and give of

our lives to the work. These people say, "We will call these 'Mormons' over and they will come to us." I think of the words of Hamlet in the play: "Could you this fair mountain leave to feed and batten on this moor?" I don't think so. They won't get many.

#### THE POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD PARAMOUNT

Now, my friends, just one word and I close. I am glad to know of the great work that is done by the Boy Scouts. Splendid! I hope it will be kept up. But I would like to say to you presidents of stakes and bishops—bishops especially, for they preside over the lesser priesthood: In all the fine work of the Boy Scouts, don't forget the deacons' quorums, nor the teachers, nor the priests. We approve of the good work that is done in other directions. "If there is anything lovely, of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." They are a part of our religion. But let it be understood now and forever in our hearts that the paramount thing is the power of the priesthood of the Son of God, the knowledge of God; for the Savior himself said: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

A man is spiritually alive who has that knowledge. We have it and we can keep it if we will magnify our callings. Therefore, magnify the Priesthood, glorify the priesthood from the president of the Church down to the last deacon. Amen.

#### ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

*My brethren and sisters*, I have enjoyed greatly the proceedings of this conference; the valiant testimony of our President, and the splendid analysis of present-day conditions by President Ivins this morning, and the declaration of unshakable faith by President Nibley, this afternoon. I bear testimony to the truth of that which has been spoken.

#### AN EVIDENCE OF THE GENUINENESS OF THE WORK

It is an evidence of the genuineness of this work, that we can gather here in large numbers, from conference to conference, to hear taught the same, simple principles. They must be true, otherwise we would not be satisfied to come here, time and time again, to hear expounded the few, easily understood truths of the gospel. If a man eat good wholesome food regularly, his body is kept in good condition and he feels well; physical happiness is his. If he has access to truth, accepts it and practices it regularly, he becomes spiritually contented. So I feel that these great gatherings, continually growing in numbers and importance, form a mighty evidence of the correctness of the latter-day work, established through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith the Prophet.

I am glad to know that obedience to the principles of the gospel is not beyond my reach. A few principles, relatively, constitute the gospel of Jesus Christ; they are given for the definite purpose of bringing