

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

happiness and joy to man in this life and in the life hereafter. It is possible for a man to obey all of them. The Lord has so ordained it that, in giving his spiritual laws, they are within the easy comprehension and full power of all honest men and women.

WE SHOULD PRACTICE ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL

I should like to impress upon the Latter-day Saints that we must, as a body of worshipers, receivers of the Latter-day truth, accept and practice as best we can *all* the principles of the gospel. I observe a tendency to make a selection of the principles of the gospel, and to say: "This one I like and shall practice; that one I am not so thoroughly converted to, and I shall not practice it." The object of the gospel, human happiness, may be won only if one practices completely the set of laws and principles which we call the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let me draw a comparison from the physical world. The white light that comes from the sun is made up of many colors, varying from violet, through all the colors, to deep red. If we take all these colors and mix them carefully, pure white light appears, but if one color is missing, the resulting light is impure. Even so with the great spiritual spectrum; only when all the principles of the gospel are practiced with all our might, are we able to win for ourselves the spiritual contentment and happiness which should characterize the private and public lives of Latter-day Saints.

OUR DUTY IN SERVING THE DEAD

As I have said, the Lord has not given us more laws than we can understand and obey. We are told to care for ourselves, that we may increase in righteous stature; we are to render service to our fellow-men; and we are instructed to help open the gospel door for those who have passed into the other life without having accepted the gospel. I desire to say something about the commandment to devote a part of our strength and means to serving the dead who have not heard or accepted the gospel. The principle of salvation for the dead is one of the most effective in tempering human character, in making men unselfish, and in enabling them to walk in the paths laid out for mankind by the Savior. Moreover, the doctrine of salvation for the dead unifies all the other principles of the gospel. When we consider that this gospel principle implies that the Lord, in his mercy and love for his children, has made it possible for every soul who loves and will obey truth to receive salvation, we begin to glimpse the unspeakable love, and the fulness of the blessings that the Lord has for his children. All that we do within the Church, whether for ourselves or in preaching the gospel to the living, can be interpreted in terms of this great fundamental principle which holds together all the other principles of the gospel. "This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." We have been told by the Prophet Joseph Smith that without our dead we cannot be saved; or, as he stated it, "the salvation of our dead is essential to our salvation." We have believed this doctrine, we believe it today, and as a result we have become a

mighty temple-building people, the only temple-building people in all the world, today. There are thoughtful men who declare that the great blessings that await this people may be, after all, an effect of our possession and use of sacred houses dedicated to the Lord in which holy ordinances for the living and the dead are consummated.

OUR NEARNESS TO THE SPIRIT WORLD

Ninety-one years ago today the ancient Prophet Elijah stood before Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland temple and delivered to this generation the keys of salvation for the dead. Since that event the spirit of that work has been poured out upon all nations and there has been developed a new feeling with respect to our ancestors. Men are beginning to look into the other world; and never before has the spirit world seemed so near to us as at the present time. It seems as if President Nibley's suggestion may be carried even further than perhaps he intended—that we shall soon be able, even by mechanical means, to come so near to the veil that separates the living and the dead as to be absolutely certain, through the use of every human sense, that the vast spirit world lies about us. I speak into this microphone and by some mysterious process my words are spread throughout space, through an unknown world, which yet is known—a world that I cannot touch, and yet just as real as the world I know by touch and by every other sense. Two months ago, I picked up the newspaper of that day, and read on the front page that that forenoon a person in New York had called up London, and another in London had answered his New York friend over the radiophone and that others had conversed over the instrument, through space, during the whole of that day—perhaps the most eventful day of the period since our last conference. Such developments, discoveries and new powers won by man, bring us nearer to the unseen world in which I have no doubt the dead live, among other beings of whom we have only slight knowledge. The world no longer argues, as in the past, against life hereafter, because fact crowds upon fact, and the logic of men is convincing, that there must be life after this, and that that life is not greatly different from the life we have lived on this side, so far as the utilization of the laws of righteousness is concerned.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE DRAWN TOWARD THE DEAD

In yet another way has the spirit of the age been drawn toward the dead, for, since the memorable visit of the Prophet Elijah, men and women by the thousands have given themselves to the discovery of the genealogies of the world. Thousands of volumes have been published, dealing entirely with the records, names and salient, vital data pertaining to those who have lived upon the earth, giving us exactly the identification needed for our work in the temples. I look upon this as one of the great gifts to our people, for, though we are one of a city and two of a family, we are nevertheless so many that we touch, practically, every family within the civilized parts of the world from which

we have come. The necessary work in genealogy has been done for us, to a great extent.

Brethren and sisters, assembled in this great conference, I believe the Lord requires of us that we all set our houses in order in this respect, that each man and woman, every family, set about to secure, just as completely as may be possible, a record of their dead, so that thereby the genealogies of the human family may be gathered and increased in number, and we may have ample material with which to labor in the temples of the Lord. Such work is not difficult to do. It may be done by any man or woman. The intricacies of arranging names in systematic genealogies may be done by those who are experts in such work, but every man and every woman in Zion may gather names, later to be fully arranged, and should give some little time to such work. With respect to gospel principles, perhaps none is more important in developing spiritual power and strength than that which pertains to the salvation for the dead. Whether we are near a temple or far away from it, we may be able to give some little time to the important work of gathering the names of our dead and arranging them for use in the temples. The Church maintains the Utah Genealogical Society, which upon request will give ample help in such genealogical endeavors. Likewise, to prevent duplication of temple work, even if we increase in numbers, the Church has provided and completed, since our last conference, a Temple Index, which permits every person who goes into a temple to assure himself that the person for whom he is working has not been served before.

THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH RESTING UPON THE PEOPLE

Thus, within and beyond the Church, the spirit of Elijah is operating and is resting upon the people. I trust that this spirit may enter even more completely into the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, that they may continue to be a temple-building people, that we may use our temples more abundantly, that we may provide ways and means, by earnest effort, through which such work may be done. I feel assured in my own heart, from my own experience and the experience of my friends, that those who give themselves in wisdom and with propriety to this work will round out their spiritual experiences, enrich their lives, and find a new and abiding joy in all duties pertaining to life under the gospel of Jesus Christ.

TESTIMONY

I know that this afternoon is a precious one. Many should be heard here today, before this great congregation. I am happy to have had this privilege of bearing my testimony to you, and of speaking briefly upon an important gospel principle. I bear witness to the existence of God, the Father of our spirits; to the divinity of Jesus Christ, his Son; to the divine mission of Joseph Smith, and to the truth of the faith that brings joy and happiness to faithful members of the Church. I know this work is true. God bless us and establish us in the testimony of the truth, I pray, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.