

**ELDER JOSEPH W. McMURRIN**

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

I have rejoiced, my brethren and sisters, in the proceedings of this conference, and feel that we have had a truly wonderful time together. I have enjoyed the testimonies and counsels of all who have spoken, from President Grant to my companion and fellow-laborer, President Rulon S. Wells. I would like to say that I know, by close association with President Wells, that he has been a successful farmer in the manner that he has indicated, in sowing the seeds of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of the children of men. I joyfully bear witness to the good that has come to me as an individual through my companionship with President Wells, both at home and abroad, and I thank God for his example, for his patience, for his excellent teachings, for the love he has manifested for his fellow men, and for the blessings that he has produced in my own soul by his teaching and by his kind and loving companionship.

If I caught aright the suggestion made by the President of the Church yesterday, it was his desire that the mission presidents should give information concerning the mission intrusted to their care. You have all learned from the remarks of President Grant that some things a little out of the ordinary have taken place in the California mission. Three stakes have been organized in that mission. I suppose I can say in the mission, although in a sense they are entirely outside of the mission, for the presidencies of the stakes, and those who are under their direction, control and manage and direct the organizations that are within the stakes, are entirely independent of any mission authority, and yet there are missionary districts covering some of the same territory that the stakes cover. The Los Angeles missionary district covers the territory that is embraced in the Los Angeles and Hollywood stakes. The San Francisco missionary district covers the identical territory now embraced in the San Francisco stake. I think there has never been just this kind of experience in missions before. It is true that stakes have been organized that have taken sections of missions, but the mission headquarters have not been maintained in the midst of those sections; so that, in California we have what might be termed a double line of authority, the authority of the mission and the authority of the various stakes.

I am happy to say that the utmost goodwill has been maintained between mission authority and stake authority. At the present time in the San Francisco stake, President MacDonald and his associates, and Bishop Newman of the San Francisco ward and his associates, and the Relief Society organizations in that section, are all banded together to improve the quarters in San Francisco that are occupied by the missionaries. We thank the Lord for such men as are in the San Francisco stake presidency and other presidencies in California, and for their desire to honor and respect and build up the missionaries and

give them opportunity to accomplish the work that belongs to them. I feel that that is just as it should be. The missionaries are sent forth by proper authority to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they should be given in California, in every stake and in every ward, abundant opportunity to lift up their voices in proclamation of the truth, that they may magnify the callings whereunto they have been called. I am happy to say that this condition prevails.

Then, outside of California the missionaries, under the direction of mission authority, have labored in the St. Joseph stake of Zion and in the Snowflake stake of Zion, and I think have been instrumental in accomplishing good in all of the stakes named. We have gone into those stakes by permission of stake authority, and have operated among the people under their jurisdiction, with their full approval and sanction. The mission has turned over to those stakes of Zion possibly some thirty wards, numbering about eleven thousand souls, and with the organization of the stakes there has gone to the stakes about two hundred thousand dollars' worth of chapel property that had been built up under mission authority. In the organization of the San Francisco stake, ten splendid wards went into that organization. I am happy to say that since the stake was organized, we have been successful in organizing four new branches in other parts of the mission, two of them being in Sacramento, the capital of the state of California. Instead of one branch in that city we now have three branches, and recently a branch has been organized in San Luis Obispo, the first Church branch ever established in that city, and we have just recently organized a branch of the Church in Compton, right in the heart of the Los Angeles stake; and this has been done with the full sanction and approval of the presidency of that stake. We hope that under mission authority men and women will be developed in the branches and in the auxiliary organizations who in a time to come will be instrumental for the advantage and welfare of that and other stakes of Zion that I have named. I am reminded also that we have labored in the Maricopa stake of Zion and have been given a most hearty welcome in that stake by President Price, who formerly was the bishop of the Phoenix ward. He has always given me to understand that when missionary tours were being made in Arizona, that he would like the Phoenix ward to be numbered, temporarily at least, in the California mission. We have had some wonderful times in Phoenix, and we have rejoiced very greatly in the testimony of Bishop Price and others that the ministry of the missionaries in that section of the country has been very greatly to the advantage of the work of the Lord in that stake.

We have, at present, outside of the stakes of Zion, nearly fifty Relief Societies, seventy Sunday schools, thirty Young Men's Mutual Improvement associations, thirty Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement associations, and thirty Primary organizations. All of these organizations are established exactly in the same manner as they are organized in the stakes of Zion, and are officered in that manner. They conduct their services strictly in accordance with the lessons outlined

by the General Boards, and that are in use in the stakes of Zion. In our mission, branch presidents carry practically the same authority carried by the bishops in the stakes of Zion. They stand at the head, they receive the tithings of the people, they ordain, according to their judgment, young men to the Aaronic Priesthood. Usually, if men are to be ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood, before such ordination their names are referred to the mission president.

We need more missionaries. I suppose it is impossible to get that into the minds of the men in authority, who are here in this congregation. I mean not the men behind me, but you men down in the congregation who make recommendations to the presidency of the Church. We have discovered a way of getting missionaries that could be adopted. It is to call stake presidents into the mission field. They sent Stephen L. Chipman to the California mission, and there seemed to come to Brother Chipman a great revelation concerning the necessity of missionaries, and while he was in the mission field he got more missionaries from the Alpine stake of Zion than he has been able to obtain since he returned. One of our missionaries intimated that it was because he had the missionary spirit upon him in the mission field, more than he had in the Alpine stake of Zion; but if we could have other stake presidents sent into the California mission, who would do the same work that President Chipman did in obtaining missionaries, one of our great problems would be solved.

I was impressed yestergay with the testimony of President Henry H. Rolapp. He told us that when he was called to preside over the Eastern states mission he had some question in his mind as to whether that would be a satisfactory way in which to spend his time, and yet he declared that a wonderful revelation had come to him regarding the joy of missionary work. Well, that comes to every missionary who faithfully meets the obligation that rests upon him. I would not like to be misunderstood, or to give offense to anybody, but I say deliberately that in the mission field I have listened to trembling boys and trembling girls bear witness concerning the truth of the gospel, when my own soul has been pierced just as greatly as in listening to the testimony of any man of authority who has ever saluted my ears with his testimony. I thank God for that condition. Young men and young women do make the discovery by the power of God that they are engaged in the work of God; and I feel that when these weak vessels, for they feel that they are weak, can pierce and melt my own soul and bring tears of joy to my eyes with their testimonies, surely by the same spirit and by the same power they may reach the hearts of men who are not of our faith, and that the Almighty, by the weak things that he has called and sent forth to minister in his name, is actually accomplishing the work designed in the sending forth of these young men and young women who feel most intensely their own weakness. I thank God for their companionship. I am proud of them, I love them, I trust them, and I believe they love me. They gladly hearken to my counsel, and they carry out, generally speaking, without hesitation, and

in great cheerfulness, the recommendations that are made to them.

During this last month of September, we suggested to the missionaries of California that in honor of the one hundredth anniversary of the delivery of the plates of the Book of Mormon to Joseph the prophet, they should make an extra effort to place the Book of Mormon. They responded wonderfully. We do not know just how many were placed, but we believe that in September alone we placed in the California mission three or four thousand copies of the Book of Mormon.

I am glad to say that about twenty-six of our branches are housed in comfortable chapel buildings, which they own and control. This has been brought about by the liberality of the presidency of the Church, and it has given me wonderful satisfaction to tell the people in the California mission that every dollar of the tithing paid throughout the California mission has been expended in helping to house the branches of California in proper meeting places. When I say that of California it includes portions of the state of Nevada, and portions of the state of Arizona. We have built during the season just closing a comfortable little chapel in Fresno, California. We are roofing at the present time in Prescott, Arizona, a wonderful chapel, built to endure, you would think to look upon it, forever and ever, built out of blocks of granite. And the preliminary steps have been taken for the erection of a chapel in Binghampton, Arizona, and in Palo Alto, California. So, little by little we are obtaining better foothold, and I am happy to say that I feel in my soul that it is not a liability, in any sense of the word, in the California mission, to be known as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I believe, with many of our non-"Mormon" friends, that the announcement that an individual is a member of the Church is a distinct asset to him, and we are held, generally speaking, in high esteem by our non-"Mormon" friends in Nevada, in California and in Arizona. We feel that the purposes of God are advancing, and we know, thank God, that we are engaged in the Lord's service. May he help us to meet our obligations and magnify our callings, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

We are honored with the presence of General Charles T. Summerall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, and some of his associate officers. He is visiting Salt Lake on a tour of inspection. We will ask our organist to play a selection in honor of these guests, and then we will be honored by listening to the General.

An organ solo was then rendered by Edward P. Kimball.

### PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

I have very great pleasure in presenting General Summerall.