

thing, and I want a whole lot more in return." No, that kind of spirit in paying tithes will not get you any blessing. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver—one who can go to the bishop and say: "Bishop, I feel all right. I want to help the Church. I am going to do all I can. Here is my tithing, my full tithing. I want to build up this work and be the means of helping it." If he goes in that spirit, thankful for what he has received, he will obtain the blessing. But let him not give something merely in the hope of getting more in return, for that spirit will not do at all. Let him give in this spirit: "Lord, thou hast blessed me. Here is thy portion. Of all that thou wilt give unto me, I will surely give a tenth unto thee." The Lord bless you. Amen.

The choir sang an anthem: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

MESSAGE OF THE WORD OF WISDOM

I know of nothing wiser than the Word of Wisdom. I regard this great message from the Lord as being one of the most distinctive and one of the most vital contributions coming to the world through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Like all great messages and documents it connotes even more than it denotes. It is given in sufficient detail to obviate all ambiguity, and at the same time it is sufficiently general to have application to many phases of life and to all of those items which enter into clean living. It proceeds upon the assumption that the greatest thing in life is living, and that the most indispensable thing to good living is health—bodily, mental and spiritual.

We cannot contemplate a good man who does not have respect for the sacred institution of his body. God has given to us in this dispensation a new conception of the body of man. It is something more than earth and the elements of earth. We believe that the spirit is the literal child of God, that it comes to earth in divine providence to take on mortality, that while here it is housed in a tabernacle, that that tabernacle itself is made through the beneficent provision of the Creator in his own likeness. In that conception no one may defile the tabernacle, wherein dwells the spirit, without offering affront to God who gave it. He cannot pollute his body with poisonous or disintegrating substances without committing an offense against his God and his Creator.

SENT BY WAY OF GREETING

The Word of Wisdom has come to us in what seems to me the most excellent, the most pleasing manner possible to give a message. It came by way of greeting to the Saints, not by way of constraint—so it states—in which respect it has seemed to me to be comparable to the greatest messages which came from the Redeemer of the world when in the flesh he spoke to mankind. It rings with the same spirit as do the Beatitudes, wherein the Christ said, not by way of constraint, not in the thunder of commandment, but in that lovely spirit which

characterized his ministry: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." So he gave to us this fundamental message of life and health and strength and purity, "as a principle with promise."

Is it less binding upon us; does it constrain us the less, because the Lord has said that it is pleasing unto him that we should do the things here enumerated and avoid the things here enjoined?

SPIRIT AND BODY CLOSELY RELATED

Within it comes to me the very genius of the philosophy of the gospel. Where is the man, impure in body and defiled, within whom may dwell the Spirit of the Most High? Is there not the closest of relation between the condition of our tabernacles and the spirits which therein reside? I take it that one of our supreme messages to the whole world is the word which comes from this transcendent statement of the fundamentals of our very faith: Keep clean your bodies and undefiled, in order that you may serve God and work out your destiny in mortality.

We have heard considerable during this conference relative to the disorders of society and the great iniquity which prevails in the land. If it were possible to make a survey of all those who have been guilty of infraction of the law, and who have perpetrated crimes against society, we should not find that the perpetrators of these offenses were men and women who have had sacred regard for the tabernacle of their spirits and kept clean their bodies which God gave to them.

The most serious, the direst consequences which follow an infraction of the Word of Wisdom in my judgment, are spiritual, rather than physical; for while the body may be impaired, the spirit suffers most. When the boy begins to smoke he usually ceases to pray, and when he ceases to pray he loses contact not only with our Father in heaven and his uplifting influence, but he often becomes estranged from his family and the best people and is thrown into environment which frequently brings his downfall.

TEACH PURITY AND CLEANLINESS OF LIFE

So, my brethren and my sisters of the Church, I charge you to go forth among the youth of Zion and give to them the lofty conception that we have of the bodies which God in his kindness has given to us. Do all that lies within your power to keep them from polluting these sacred institutions. Exhort them to preserve their purity for efficient service in the kingdom of our Father, for if they keep clean they will be fit instruments for the working out of the great purposes of our Lord. Let us devote our time and our energy, our preaching and our teaching, to the cleanliness of life that follows the keeping of the Word of Wisdom. I pray also that the message which comes from this great and remarkable statement given to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith may go beyond the confines of the Church into all corners of the earth, that men and women may understand that they are created in the image of God and have sacred obligation to preserve that image in all respects.

We love God. As we love him we will do what he asks. He has asked us in the most kind and affectionate way to do these things for our own welfare, for our prosperity, for our spiritual growth and development, for the preparation we need to make to carry forward his great work, to preach the gospel in its fulness, and to give to mankind proper conceptions of life. Surely as we love him we will follow his admonition and yield to his kindly persuasion. I pray that his spirit may attend us in the keeping of our bodies pure and immaculate, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

It is exceedingly gratifying to those who have responsibility for the conduct of this great latter-day work to witness the large attendance at this conference, this large Tabernacle being filled to overflowing, as well as the Assembly Hall, and great crowds of people on the grounds, perhaps thousands. And this, notwithstanding the fact that a great many people in their homes today are hearing the proceedings of the conference through their radio sets.

SALVATION AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

I have been edified and built up by what I have felt and heard during the sessions of this conference. My heart has been made to rejoice exceedingly. Every speaker has spoken upon some one or more phases of the gospel, and the gospel is given us that we might know what salvation is and how we may attain that boon and blessing. There is no other question of such great importance to mankind as that of salvation, of what it consists and how it may be attained. There is no other question that has engaged the attention of so many people as that of salvation, and perhaps there is no other question upon which there has been such a diversion of views and opinions. As I understand it, this is the cause of there being so many religious sects, creeds and denominations upon the earth today, and this fact is strange when we think that all these religionists have based their views and established their creeds and denominations upon a belief in the Bible, and its doctrines.

WHY SO MANY CREEDS?

It seems to call for an answer to the question: Why is it so? And I am reminded of the sayings of the scripture that prophecy came not in olden time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. The contents of the Old and New testaments, then, are the things of God given to the children of men by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The trouble with men today, and the cause of this spiritual darkness that is found everywhere throughout Christendom is that men lack that spirit, the power of the Holy Ghost, that was enjoyed by the prophets who wrote and spoke the things contained in that sacred book, the Bible. If we had the same spirit, the same measure of that spirit, we would understand as they understood, and we would all understand alike.