

and I was surprised how deeply interested I became in the people who inhabited this continent. I discovered that whenever they served God and kept his commandments they prospered in the land; and whenever they failed (and I hope we will never fail) then came their destruction, until that people became extinct.

I pray God to bless you. I pray God to be with each and all of us, for I do not believe that a man can remain faithful in this Church and devoted and true to his covenants, who fails to keep the commandments and who has not a testimony that Jesus is the Christ. To this end I pray that the blessings of the Lord may rest upon us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

I realize that I am standing in the presence of the strength of Israel; in the presence of men who have been tried and proved; who have been called to responsible positions in the Church, in stakes, in wards, and in missions. These calls have come because of integrity and obedience to the principles of the gospel and the kingdom of God.

DUTIES OF WATCHMEN ON THE TOWERS

I desire to address myself more particularly to you, my brethren. We are watchmen on the towers of Zion. The Lord has placed in our hands great and wonderful responsibilities. No men anywhere in all the earth, no matter what their calling, hold responsibility equal to that which we have received, for we have had conferred upon us the priesthood of God. We are possessed of divine authority and have been set apart as his servants and watchmen upon the towers of Zion. Our duty is to teach, to guide and direct the members of the Church in the path of righteousness. Our duty is to set examples before the world, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father in heaven, and have faith and confidence in us. It is our duty to warn all men and endeavor to teach them the truth, so that those who will not hearken may be left without excuse.

I endorse all that has been said at this conference and I hope that the things we have been taught will find place in our hearts and that they may never be removed. Something has been said, very timely, very necessarily, in regard to the sacrament, in regard to the Word of Wisdom, the payment of tithing and offerings, in regard to fasting and other principles of the gospel. There are one or two thoughts that I desire to present in relation to the question of the sacrament, more particularly in regard to the meetings that have been set apart in the Church by revelation, by commandment of the Lord, for the partaking of these emblems representing the body and the blood of Jesus Christ.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SACRAMENT

In my judgment the sacrament meeting is the most sacred, the most holy, of all the meetings of the Church. When I reflect upon

the gathering of the Savior and his apostles on that memorable night when he introduced the sacrament; when I think of that solemn occasion my heart is filled with wonderment and my feelings are touched. I consider that gathering one of the most solemn and wonderful since the beginning of time. There the Savior taught them of his coming sacrifice, which in their bewilderment they could not understand. He plainly told them of his death and that his blood should be shed, and this was said in the very hour of his agony for the sins of the world. It was a very solemn occasion; there the sacrament was instituted, and the disciples were commanded to meet together often and commemorate the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, for his sacrifice was for the redemption of the world. He was about to take upon him the responsibility of paying the debt brought upon the world through the fall, that men might be redeemed from death and from hell. He had taught the people that he was to be lifted up that he might draw all men unto him, and that all who would repent and believe in him, keeping his commandments, should not suffer for he would take upon himself their sins.

THE PURPOSE OF SACRAMENT MEETINGS

We have been called upon to commemorate this great event and to keep it in mind constantly. For this purpose we are called together once each week to partake of these emblems, witnessing that we do remember our Lord, that we are willing to take upon us his name and that we will keep his commandments. This covenant we are called upon to renew each week and we cannot retain the Spirit of the Lord if we do not consistently comply with this commandment. If we love the Lord we will be present at these meetings in the spirit of worship and prayer, remembering the Lord and the covenant we are to renew each week through this sacrament as he has required it of us.

APPROPRIATE SERVICES

I do not believe that the Lord is pleased with us when we turn this sacred meeting into a concert. I do not believe that he is pleased with us if we assemble in this meeting in a spirit of levity and not solemnity. I am sure he is not pleased when men are called to speak in these services whose hearts are not touched by the principles of the gospel, and when they have no faith in the mission of Jesus Christ, and when they cast doubts upon the efficacy of his atonement and the sacrifice he made for the sins of the world. I am sure he is not pleased when we meet on such occasions to be amused, to be entertained, rather than to be instructed and to obtain spiritual education and thought and reflection.

I do not believe it is necessary, very frequently at least, for presiding officers to go outside of their wards and stakes to find speakers; not that this is something they should never do, but I think we many times ignore worthy men living in our wards who are filled with the spirit of the gospel. I know it is not pleasing to me when

I attend a service and someone is called upon to speak who stands before the people and presents, though it be in a pleasing way, some platitudes, some philosophy of men,—the ideas of those who today mould the thought of the world, but who in their own hearts have no faith in or love for Jesus Christ—or who discuss questions at variance with the fundamental principles of the gospel. I think this is an occasion when the gospel should be presented, when we should be called upon to exercise faith and to reflect on the mission of our Redeemer and to spend time in the consideration of the saving principles of the gospel, and not for other purposes. Amusement, laughter, light-mindedness, are all out of place in the sacrament meetings of the Latter-day Saints. We should assemble in the spirit of prayer, of meekness, with devotion in our hearts. I know of no other place where we can gather where we should be more reflective and solemn and where more of the spirit of worship should be maintained.

SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES

The Lord called upon the people in an early day of the Church to meet in solemn assembly, and speaking of these assemblies, he said:

"Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing, and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;

"That your incomings may be in the name of the Lord, that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord, that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High."

"Therefore, cease from all your light speeches, from all laughter, from all your lustful desires, from all your pride and light-mindedness, and from all your wicked doings."

We should not get the idea from this scripture that the Lord is displeased with us when we laugh, when we have merriment, if it is on the right occasions. He has said, however, that in our solemn assemblies such things as light-mindedness, laughter and merriment are out of order. We should cease from all light speeches, laughter and wrongful thoughts and desires, from all things which will detract from the teachings and the influence of the Spirit of the Lord.

I felt that I would like to say this much after listening to the excellent remarks on the sacrament and the purpose for which it was instituted.

COVENANTS AND OBLIGATIONS

In conclusion I want to ask you a few questions, and I speak, of course, to all the members of the Church. Do you think a man who comes into the sacrament service in the spirit of prayer, humility, and worship, and who partakes of these emblems representing the body and blood of Jesus Christ, will knowingly break the commandments of the Lord? If a man fully realizes what it means when he partakes of the sacrament, that he covenants to take upon him the name of Jesus Christ and to always remember him and keep his commandments,

and this vow is renewed week by week—do you think such a man will fail to pay his tithing? Do you think such a man will break the Sabbath day or disregard the Word of Wisdom? Do you think he will fail to be prayerful, and that he will not attend his quorum duties and other duties in the Church? It seems to me that such a thing as a violation of these sacred principles and duties is impossible when a man knows what it means to make such vows week by week unto the Lord and before the saints.

If we have the right understanding we will live in full accord with the principles of truth and walk in righteousness before the Lord. How can we receive his Spirit otherwise? I can see the significance in the commandment the Lord has given us to assemble frequently and partake of these emblems in commemoration of his death. It is our duty to assemble and renew our covenants and take upon us fresh obligations to serve the Lord and keep his sayings of which we have heard so much during this conference. How can a man go forth after making such covenants and cheat his neighbor? or rob the Lord? or violate any other commandment and refuse to walk in the light of truth? I am sure if we could picture before us—as I have tried many times to do—the solemn occasion when the Savior met with his apostles; if we could see them there assembled, the Lord in his sadness, sorrowing for the sins of the world, sorrowing for one of his apostles who was to betray him, yet teaching these eleven men who loved him and making covenant with them, I am sure we would feel in our hearts that we would never forsake him. If we could see them there assembled and could realize the weight of the burden which was upon our Lord; and after their supper and the singing of an hymn, their going forth, the Lord to be betrayed, mocked and scorned, the disciples to forsake him in the deepest hour of his trial—if we could understand all this, feebly though it be, and feebly it must be, I am sure, my brethren and sisters, we would forever more want to walk in the light of truth. If we could see the Savior of men suffering in the garden and upon the cross and could fully realize all that it meant to us, we would desire to keep his commandments and we would love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our might, mind and strength, and in the name of Jesus Christ would serve him.

That we may have the desire to do this I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

We would appreciate it if each of the brethren whose names I will read, would leave word at the Bureau of Information, if they are here; because I do not like to call on them if they are not here.

We have been in the habit of hearing from our United States mission presidents, nearly always at these conferences, but we have neglected Brothers Andrew Johnson, J. A. Cahoon, Samuel Martin,