

remarkable prediction was the unexpected advent of the gold-hunters on their way to California. The discovery of gold in that land had set on fire, as it were, the civilized world and hundreds of richly laden trains now began pouring across the continent on their way to the new Eldorado. Salt Lake valley became the resting place. Thus as the Prophet Heber had predicted, States Goods were actually sold in the streets of Great Salt Lake City cheaper than they could have been purchased in the city of New York."

Now, brethren, that is how I feel about it. I take pride in being a son of my father and as long as I live I shall never fail to honor my father and his successors, and try to be as loyal and true and steadfast in the faith as they have been. I am the only one that can destroy my faith in this work. God bless you. Amen.

ELDER DAVID A. SMITH

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

After one hundred years, and then what?

During the past year we have been dwelling largely in the past, and it seems to me that when we look upon the work of our fathers, our mothers, our grandfathers and grandmothers, and view their great accomplishments, there can be no question that this Church has grown in a wonderful manner. No organization could make such a growth other than through the help, inspiration and leadership of an all-wise Father. As I view these accomplishments I wonder if we are not, to a certain extent, living now too much in the past, and not enough upon the past, for the experiences and accomplishments of the past should be a tower of strength to urge us on to greater individual effort.

I heard a brother who was preaching a sermon on tithing say that his father overpaid his tithing and some of his children were drawing on it to this day. Surely such action cannot be considered as a growth. How can we use the past to help us build for the future? Truly they showed the way. Are we doing our part to carry on? If so, there need be very little concern for the future. If we have a clear picture of the struggles of the past one hundred years, and understand the principles that made it possible for them to build such a foundation, we should go on with a sincere desire to build for our future welfare and salvation.

One of the writers in the Book of Mormon tells us:

"For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day

of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked."

And so I say we should be gravely concerned with today. If so, tomorrow will take care of itself, and the work entrusted to us will be nobly done, and our reward assured.

Brother McMurrin made a plea for more missionaries. Our mission presidents are constantly doing that. There isn't a month that their reports do not contain pleas for more help. It is marvelous what this people are doing, many even sacrificing the comforts of life to provide for their children who are engaged in missionary work, but how many make an equal effort to prepare them for this service before they leave for the mission field. I am sure better preparation which must come through active service will go a long way to meet the demands made upon us.

Yesterday, sitting in a group in this tabernacle, we had eighty-seven young men and women who next week will leave for the mission field. They are young and inexperienced. They have a testimony of the Gospel, but they are not altogether sure of themselves at the present time. They are anxious to be engaged in a good cause. Last night at seven o'clock I met with them, this being the last period of their day's work. Their first class yesterday was at nine o'clock in the morning. They were excused at nine forty-five and came here in a body to attend this Conference. They were here in the afternoon, and went from that meeting to another class; had a luncheon period, and then to another class. At the close of their class at eight o'clock last night I asked them to select a song to close, for we always begin and close our day's work with song and prayer. The song first suggested seemed to me, for the moment, a bit of irony. It was announced as "Do not weary by the way." As we sang the song, I stood facing that group. I tried to detect such a feeling on their part. I found everyone singing—not just the words, for all were singing as we can sing only when touched by the Spirit of God. When the prayer of dismissal had been offered after nine hours of religious service, these young people, whom you have sent from your homes to go into the mission field, gathered around me with more questions, untiring in their effort to gain more information.

We shall not be greatly concerned for them while they are in the mission field, for they are going out with a purpose, and God is with them and watching over them, and will hear and answer their prayers and our prayers in their behalf, and as long as they continue in that service in faith, his blessings will rest upon them, and they will return home to bear testimony of his goodness, and to the truth of the Gospel.

Then is the time when we should be gravely concerned for them, for we find many times these young missionaries come home and find themselves in the condition, in a measure, that the Savior found himself in, as related to us by Brother Richards today. Speaking of Jesus:

"And when he was come unto his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

Let us compare the faith of these, his own people, with the faith of one who was despised by the Jews.

"So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house."

I am wondering if in Israel today we are not lacking just a little bit in faith. During the last summer we received many reports saying: "We have been unable to do anything with our priesthood work. It is vacation period, and everybody feels that they should have a vacation from church work."

I do not feel to criticize any who have a desire to take a vacation, for a change and rest is necessary at times, but even then they must have food if their physical welfare is to be preserved. But I have yet to find a good reason for taking a vacation from spiritual work, and from that association which comes to those who are humbly seeking spiritual food. On the contrary, as I view the situation, I find that those who feel that it is necessary to take a vacation from church work seem to forget that spiritual food is necessary to preserve the spiritual body and without it the spiritual body begins to die for lack of nourishment. That death may come slowly or, if sin overtake them, it may come quickly, and I believe one of the greatest dangers that we have confronting us is the sin of indifference which surely leads to spiritual death.

There is no time for vacation in this service. God is working constantly. He requires that his children upon whom the priesthood has been conferred labor in spirit constantly, for the spirit of God will not always strive with man. We cannot lay this work aside and take it up as we feel inclined, for if we hope to succeed we must work daily, hourly and every minute. We must so live that these temples which God has given to us and which we call our physical being will be kept clean and a fit dwelling place for his spirit. That can best be done through associations provided through our gatherings, such as priesthood and sacramental meetings where spiritual uplift is engaged in.

This condition is manifest in our missionaries who, after having devoted all of their time to the spiritual, come home strong in spirit.

We should be concerned for these young people who return from the mission field, because I find, or I think I find that sometimes we do not have a full sense of responsibility regarding their future welfare. It can be pictured to you in this statement. I heard a father say to his boy, who had just returned from the mission field: "Come on now, son, get off your good clothes and get into your old ones and get to work. You have been loafing long enough."

Most of them don't loaf in the mission field, but we force them to loaf sometimes when they come home, because we fail to feed them, to give them that spiritual food that kept them active while in the mission field. And so they die spiritually, and we wonder why. Don't blame them. It isn't their fault. It isn't their choosing. They would have it otherwise.

Now, what of the future? I must not talk longer, but let me give just a little illustration that perhaps will show you what can be done. After the close of the past year, when bishops were sending their annual reports to the Presiding Bishop's Office, one bishop came with his, and as he turned to leave the office, he waved his hand to me. I returned his salute and beckoned him to come into the side office where I was, for he had a broad smile on his face and seemed unusually happy. He stepped to the door, and stated that he had no desire to disturb me. He just wanted to say "hello." I suggested that he seemed happy and asked how he managed to get that way, for it is unusual to find a bishop in that frame of mind at that time of the year. He answered that he was happy because the people over whom he was presiding were helping him. He stated that he had been bishop two years. He said:

"When I started in to get acquainted with the people of my ward I found it was very difficult to make much headway with the older people. They were fixed in their habits. They were doing some church work, but not much. Most of them were willing to let someone else do the work. Their activity record was on a par with their spiritual condition. We decided to take up a labor with the younger people. We reorganized the Aaronic Priesthood quorums, conferred with those who were active, and they helped us outline a campaign to encourage greater activity. We sent them out to bring in those who were inactive. They responded with such a spirit of good will that soon every boy who held the Aaronic Priesthood was in attendance at meetings. We decided to take up as our first major activity a campaign for the year on tithing. Our first duty was to convert ourselves. Every phase of the subject was discussed. All agreed to work with a desire to have every person holding the Aaronic Priesthood a full tithepayer. We gave quorums credits based on numbers. Some complained that we were bribing them, in offering credits for the payment of tithing, but nevertheless it was a means of encouraging them. They brought in their five cents, their ten cents, their twenty cents each week as they earned money. After a while the parents gave more thought to their tithing, and last year, when I came in with my tithing settlement, we had double the tithing of the year before and more than double the number of active members, due largely to the activity of these young men whom we taught to observe this principle. And this year we have increased the tithing of our ward just as much as we increased it last year and the ward members are responding to every call, and that is why I am happy to come in here with my final report."

I could mention many such experiences.

My brethren and sisters, what of tomorrow? Tomorrow may never come, to some of us; but may the blessings of God rest upon us today, that we may be touched with the power and influence of his Holy Spirit. May we have power to see clearly the purpose of this great work; may we see clearly the niche in which we belong, that we may fit in and do that which is required of us to the best of our ability, for there is work for all to do. We belong to the most wonderful organization in all the world. Men are called to positions of responsibility, and after a time are released, and take their places in the ranks that others may gain experience through leadership. There are no hard feelings, jealousy, or contention, for men serve wherever they are called to serve. They do not seek honor, and serve with fear and trembling, happy to be engaged in such a noble cause.

May we continue in that spirit. May we have love in our hearts for each other. May we work for each other, and to the end that God's purposes shall be brought about, and when the time comes for us to lay down the part we are called to play, I sincerely trust it will be said of us: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter into my rest." May God bless us, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I trust that the few moments I occupy I may enjoy the Spirit that comes from our Heavenly Father, that gives to us power to think, to reason, and to teach.

This Conference has been one of great interest to me. My mind has been directed toward so many things that pertain to our work. I have been making notes during the entire period of our meetings, up to now, notes that I trust I may use to refresh my mind when I am in the conferences of the Church, because very many times a suggestion or an idea directs to a portion of the scripture, and when we read it it sounds a little different from what we thought it did, because it has been a long time since we read it, perhaps.

A BLESSED PEOPLE

We are a blessed people. I know of no other people in the world who have more reason to be grateful than we. We have all that the world has in the way of information, education, culture, refinement; and besides that we have an understanding of the purpose of life; we have the privilege of being identified with the Church of the Lamb of God.

We are wonderfully blessed in the assurance that the Lord gives to us of eternal life, and when we compare the information that we have obtained with that which many of our Father's children in the world have, we are made to realize that much will be expected of us, because unto us much has been given.