

MEN OF GOD

I declare to you, with all sincerity of heart, that I know, personally, that the declarations that President Grant made concerning the honor, the integrity and the faithfulness and devotion of these leaders, are true. I know it. They are men of God. They are not living double lives. They are living what they have taught the Latter-day Saints to live, and thank the Lord you know it. We don't need to argue it with you, for you have a witness, a testimony in your hearts, that convinces you that it is the truth.

Yes, glorious things await Zion, and the evil one knows it, and he will try, if possible, to stop the work, try to divide our ranks. He will try to disturb us, but he shall not succeed. These little disturbances will pass. The work will go on. God's glorious purposes will be accomplished. I am as sure of it as I am that I live. I bear witness and testimony of it to you this day, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me, my brethren and sisters, to find that my feelings are in complete harmony with those expressed by the speakers in this Conference, both this forenoon and this afternoon. I know that they have spoken the truth, that they have counseled us in righteousness, and if we will obey this counsel our lives will be happier and we will be more secure in our salvation.

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I have known all of the Presidents of the Church except the Prophet Joseph Smith. I was sixteen years of age when President Brigham Young died. I have been personally acquainted with his successors, and with many of the noble men of this Church who have been associated with them in the conduct of the affairs of the Church.

I have seen the work prosper and grow, and truth triumph, and I know that these men have been men of God, including those who stand at the head of the Church today. I am glad to be associated with them and to be in harmony with them, because I know they are worthy servants of God; I know that they are trying to live their religion, to live by the principles and the doctrines which they teach. I hope that you will not discover in my remarks anything that would lead you to think otherwise than that I am in complete harmony with them.

I want to say that although I did not have the privilege of knowing the Prophet Joseph here in the flesh, yet I know, just as well, that he was a prophet of God, divinely called and inspired, and the work which he brought forth is evidence of that fact.

SEEKING SALVATION

I know that the Gospel is true. I have proved it from many

angles, to my entire satisfaction, and have had the seal of the Spirit of God to impress the truth of it upon my mind. I rejoice in this testimony and in the knowledge I have that there are thousands of men and women in this Church who are faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord and in doing his will, who know the truth of the work and are trying to work out their salvation in fear and trembling before him.

I remember hearing a president of a Stake, while speaking from this stand at one of our General Conferences, make the remark that in his Stake there were people who were candidates for every degree of glory. That no doubt represents the conditions in the Church today, hence the necessity for our speaking of certain simple principles and truths, over and over again.

A STRONG ARGUMENT

A strong argument in favor of prohibition was brought forth this afternoon by Elder Smoot, who read from Robert G. Ingersoll's declaration of the evil results of strong drink. I thought, in that connection, that there is a stronger argument to present to Latter-day Saints than all that—one that appeals to me, at any rate, more forcefully and convincingly—and that is that it is the expressed mind and will of our Father in heaven that we abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks. Then too, there are other things referred to in the Word of Wisdom which our Father has told us we should not indulge in. Tobacco is one of them, and others are strong drinks and hot drinks, which have been interpreted by the Authorities of this Church, whom we have sustained as prophets, seers and revelators, from the days of the Prophet Joseph down to the present time, to include tea and coffee. I accept the interpretation of the Word of Wisdom made by these, the servants of God, just as much as if tea and coffee had been mentioned in the Word of Wisdom. To me, our Father in heaven has spoken and said: "It is my will that you do not use tea and coffee. It is my will that you do not use intoxicating drinks. It is my will that you do not use tobacco." Have I any respect for the will and wishes of God, my Heavenly Father? If I have, and have faith in him, and in the revelations that have come to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith, I will keep that Word of Wisdom as I understand it, and as it is interpreted by the Authorities of this Church.

There are thousands of men and women in this Church who regard this matter just as I do, and who are keeping the Word of Wisdom, but I am sorry to say there are thousands of others who seem to have very little respect for the will of God as he has given it to us in this important revelation.

WAR IN HEAVEN

We read an account of a war that took place in heaven. It is recorded in the twelfth chapter of the book of Revelation—that a third of heaven's hosts, rather than do the will of God, were drawn away in rebellion, and were cast out and down, and are not permitted to have

bodies for their spirits, or to obtain any degree of glory. On the other hand, those who stood with our Captain, our King, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on the platform: "Father thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever," are here enjoying the blessings of this life and are in the way of salvation. One might say that platform pertained to the spirit world. It did pertain to the spirit world, but it pertained as well to this, our second estate.

THE WILL OF THE FATHER

The Savior repeatedly, while here in life, made the declaration that he came not to do his own will, but to do the will of his Father who sent him. After his death and resurrection, when he appeared to the ancient inhabitants of this, the American continent, and established his Church, and preached the Gospel to them, he renewed that statement in a very forceful way, as recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of III Nephi, verse 13. He said:

"Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me."

Then he goes on with his comments, and in the twenty-seventh verse we have this further expression of our Lord:

"Therefore what manner of men had ye ought to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am."

I associate the two expressions, that he came to do the will of his Father who sent him, and that we have come also to do the will of our Father who has sent us. And what manner of men ought we to be? Even as he was. If we do the will of our Father, as he did it and as he taught it, it will make us like him, and will save us with him in our Father's kingdom. If we do the will of our Father it will not only be the keeping of the Word of Wisdom, but every commandment which he has given will appeal to us as the will of our Father, which we must observe. Every law of the Gospel will have the same appeal to our souls.

OTHER REASONS FOR OBSERVING WORD OF WISDOM

This is the strong appeal: If we will not abstain from the use of tobacco, from tea and coffee and intoxicating drinks, because of their evil effects upon our bodies, and upon our minds and our spirituality; then, for the love of God, our Father, and to be in accord with his mind and will, we ought to observe that Word.

There is another responsibility in connection with it, devolving upon us, and that is, we owe something to our parents. Men and women, boys and girls, who have been born in this Church of faithful, true, Latter-day Saints, are under obligation to their parents to honor them; and when we do not keep the Word of Wisdom but indulge in these things, we not only do not honor them, but we dishonor them, and that we have no right to do.

God has set his hand to save his children and invites us to assist him in this great and glorious work, and when we live contrary to the teachings of the Gospel we hinder instead of helping his cause, and some of us perhaps will do more injury to the cause than all the good we do. None of us, at any rate, can afford to deviate from the word and will of the Lord.

I know that this work is true. I know it is good. I thank God that I have lived as well and as nearly to his laws as I have thus far, and I hope and pray that I may so continue and make improvement as long as I live upon the earth, so that I may be accounted worthy to dwell with the sanctified and the pure, so that I will not be disappointed when life here is ended. I would like you, my brethren and sisters, to enjoy the same blessing.

In closing, I appeal to those who have not been keeping the Word of Wisdom, in the name of the Lord and for his sake and consideration, that you hereafter do not use tea and coffee, that you do not use tobacco, that you do not use strong and intoxicating drinks. I appeal to you in behalf of the President of this Church, God's mouthpiece unto us, and those associated with him, that you do the things that will please them. If you would uphold and sustain them, observe these things. That will give them more encouragement than anything else that we can possibly do in this mighty work.

May God add his blessing unto us, each and all, according to our need, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG

Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Temple Block Mission

An American prophet, King Benjamin, whose history we read in the Book of Mormon said on one occasion:

"And again I say unto you as I have said before, that as ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God, or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love, and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such exceeding great joy in your souls, even so I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.

"And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true."

Then we have the words of Jesus as recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Mark, the Evangelist, which read: "My words shall not pass away." The words and teachings of Jesus Christ, our Lord, shall not pass away. They shall live in the hearts of mankind forever. From Jesus Christ as from no other teacher in the world's history