

ELDER HYRUM G. SMITH

Presiding Patriarch of the Church

I am very grateful to be present on this occasion, and trust that I may enjoy the Spirit of the Lord while I stand before you this afternoon. I enjoyed this morning's session very much, and testify that the Spirit of the Lord was present in goodly portion.

I desire to express my appreciation and gratitude for the prayers of the Saints, in my behalf, and I acknowledge the hand of the Lord in his blessings, that I am able to be present upon this occasion.

PEOPLE DISTURBED OVER FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

A great many of the Latter-day Saints have been somewhat disturbed in their feelings as to how they are going to take care of themselves financially, or how they are going to support their families. Among the chief visitors at my office seeking comfort are those having had employment and lost it. I have learned of their sympathy and their faith, which are pure and sacred, and their testimonies are of great value to them.

I am grateful for the support that has come to me through answer to prayer, for I know that the Lord has blessed us, both as a people and as individuals.

FAITH IN THE CHURCH AND ITS LEADERS

I am not discouraged or downhearted. My faith has not wavered. I still have faith in the work, and know that it is true. I have faith in the leaders of the Church, and know that they are worthy servants, that they are humble and devoted to the work of the Lord, some of them going beyond their natural strength in order to perform their wonderful tasks or to fulfil their appointments. Our missionaries, too, have been wonderfully blessed and preserved. They have been attended by the Spirit and power of the Lord. They have made many friends, and their teachings have brought conviction to many honest-hearted souls.

VISITORS FROM MANY STATES AND COUNTRIES

During the summer months a great many tourists, both members and non-members, have visited my office, people who have come from the States, and in many cases those who have come from the countries of the world and from the islands of the sea. Automobiles and good roads make these conditions possible. These friendly visits from the people both far and near are doing much to spread and establish the truth.

Many who come to my office are filled with some degree of anxiety over their conditions and their circumstances, and as a rule when people are out of work and do not know from where their needs are to be supplied, they are very humble, so that I have been instrumental, in a way, in trying to cheer and comfort those who are

tried in their feelings and in their conditions and circumstances.

I bear testimony that the Lord has been very gracious to the members of the Church and that he has further promises and blessings in store for them.

DISCERNING BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITS

I should like also to add my testimony to the testimonies of my brethren who spoke this morning, concerning the spirits that are with us to guide, inspire, and protect us. Many people have said to me: "Brother Smith, how can you tell the difference between the promptings of the Lord, or his agencies, and the promptings of the adversary or his agencies?" They say they are unable, in most respects, to discern the difference between those promptings. I have said: "After earnest and sincere prayer follow your first impression, and you will always go right." Then they say: "Well, how can I tell which is my first impression? They are usually so close to each other it is difficult to even tell which is the first impression." Then I say: "The impression made by the Spirit that is for our guide in safety in the Church is always from a good spirit, the Spirit that proclaims and announces the truth, and the truth doesn't need an alibi or crutches to support it." So if you go back and knock down all the crutches, all the alibis, all the excuses, the ifs and ands and buts that attempt to support it, that crowd and urge us—because, as a rule, I have discovered that the adversary's agencies, in their promptings, are usually of an urging, crowding, hurrying nature; while the Spirit of the Lord and his agencies are always of a quiet, sweet, peaceful and convincing character,—so that after we have done away with all the excuses, all the alibis that usually support our experiences, we can discover which is the right spirit. The spirit of conviction, of peace and of charity, which is the love of the Lord and his work, is not in a hurry, but has time to decide, time to weigh, time to consider; does not act in haste, but in calm deliberation. We learn then the truth, and we have a guide which is a companion to every member of the Church who is faithful and true, so that we are able, through the blessings of the Lord, to receive that comfort and consolation which will support us, even in time of distress.

I bear my testimony, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord does give us this guide and this support, if we are faithful and true to him.

BLESSINGS THROUGH DEVOTION

I desire to extend to the Latter-day Saints in all the Church the blessings of the Lord, and as his humble servant I pray that peace and comfort and consolation from the Lord may come to every member of the Church. I am sure in my feelings that the Lord will continue to bless and support us, but I think he is also giving us a splendid lesson for service, while he is giving a greater lesson to the world, who know him not. He is giving us a splendid opportunity to show our faith and our works. None of us has suffered in want. We

have been supplied, comforted, and sustained. We have had many blessings of the land and of the things that are produced upon it. Our comfortable and happy homes and our conditions in life all proclaim the graciousness of the Lord to his people. We can retain these blessings through our devotion to the Lord.

I pray that the Lord will continue to remember us, and especially those who have made sacred covenants in sacred places, and those who have been magnified with the power of the priesthood, which is a great honor to bear. It always brings a distressful feeling to me to see members of the Church careless and indifferent and slight their covenants and their privileges. I pray that the Lord will help us, that we may not slight our privileges, that we may be true to our covenants and hold them sacred always. I pray the Lord to bless our young people when they start out in life, that they may have strength and faith sufficient to retain their companionship and association, and be true and faithful to their responsibilities in the Church.

I desire to bless you all, and I pray the favors of the Lord upon you, upon the officers and members of the Church, the missionaries, and all who are laboring for the truth; and I declare these testimonies and pray God's blessings upon you all in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

President of the Central States Mission

I feel very happy, my brethren and sisters, to be in attendance at this conference and I appreciate the opportunity of meeting and visiting with the Saints of God at this time.

Yesterday, when President Grant was speaking, the thought came to my mind, What does it profit a person to pray to our Heavenly Father for guidance and for spiritual strength and wisdom if at the same time that person does not reverence God's authority here in the earth? It seems to me that men could not help but recognize that it would be futile to ask God for favors and at the same time disregard the council of the Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ here in the earth. The Authorities of this Church are our Eternal Father's representatives here in the earth and if men will not abide by their instructions, how can they expect to receive instruction from God, our Father; and, yet, we do find some people who will not recognize the council of the Lord's Authority here in the earth, but, they feel that they can go over the heads of the Authority of God and get what they want direct from the Father.

I have never found in my life where the Lord ever allowed an angel even to overstep God's Authority in the earth. He did not do it himself while he sojourned in the earth and he most certainly has not changed for he is the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not, neither does he change his principles for they are eternal truths.