

THE RICHES OF THE WORLD

Now some people, many people perhaps, some in the Church, think that this happiness I am speaking of, or fulness of joy, may be found in the riches of the world—in gold, silver, houses, lands, etc. Let me quote from a certain publication what is said respecting a very wealthy Russian nobleman :

"No one who is not rich, attractive, very young, and the center of an admiring social circle, can have any idea how intolerably tedious riches, beauty, and popularity can be. Felix Felixovich had everything he could possibly want: he was master of the largest and most valuable collection of precious stones in the world, of palaces and castles and enormous estates; he had accomplished the highest that a man of noble blood, a descendant of the Elstons could accomplish; he had won the hand of an imperial princess; his friend was the handsome universally admired Grand Duke Dimitri. And yet for him this state of perpetual happiness which hid nothing more in itself, which held out no promise of new experiences, which could offer him no further secrets, attractions, or excitements, was one of intolerable boredom and emptiness.

Like many other Russian aristocrats, Prince Felix did not avail himself of the possibility of filling his life with intellectual interests, and consequently he was tormented by the painful boredom of the absolutely rich and absolutely happy person, the man to whom nothing is forbidden, and to whom therefore, nothing any longer seems desirable. Inevitably, he began to feel his life of perpetual riches as a prison, from which there was no escape. His beautiful wife of imperial blood, his beautiful and elegant friend, the many adorers, male and female, and the handsome men and pretty women who flocked about him, were bound ultimately to seem like merciless warders, who kept him shut up in his prison of disconsolate boredom.

"The poor can hope for riches, the unloved for love, and the lowly for elevation; but for the man who like Felix Yusupov, is surrounded by enormous wealth, perpetual happiness, and unending pleasure, there remains no other outlet from his spiritual prison but crime. As the ray of light coming through his grating, so to the young prince, crime seemed the only hope of freedom. To commit a crime and once more taste a new, still unknown excitement was a dream like the prisoner's dream of freedom."

In conclusion, brethren and sisters, I testify to you in all solemnity after fifty years of experience that I do know positively with a firm knowledge and an abiding faith that this is the Church of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, that Jesus was and is the Savior of the world, and that Joseph Smith was and is a true prophet of God. I have great pleasure and happiness in bearing this testimony on this occasion. The Lord bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER SYLVESTER Q. CANNON*Presiding Bishop of the Church*

I am happy, my brethren and sisters and friends, to be with you in this conference this morning. I rejoice in the divine power that actuates this great work. Notwithstanding the adverse conditions that prevail at the present time I am sure that we all have occasion to be grateful for health and life, for appreciation of the divinity of this work, and for the privileges and blessings that have been given to us. I expressed yesterday to President Ivins my feeling that, if he desired, I would be

perfectly willing to forego being called upon to speak in this conference, so that he could have the opportunity to call some who are not ordinarily called upon. I realize that there are many men in the Church who have had experience and training, who are carrying responsibility throughout the various divisions of the Church, who could advise with us and address us upon matters that would be helpful and encouraging.

CHURCH GROWTH AND ACTIVITY

Nevertheless, I am happy to bear my testimony and to express to you my faith and assurance that this work is growing and will continue to grow and accomplish the great destiny that is before it. In this connection it may interest you to know that the Church has shown greater numerical growth throughout the United States during the past 15 years, from 1916 to 1931, in proportion to membership than any of the largest churches. The same is true of the increase in the number of congregations or wards. In Church activities of the priesthood and the members there is improvement steadily in evidence. Also, in social welfare and in matters of vital statistics, this work is making an enviable record. As was stated by President Ivins this morning, there has been a decrease in the tithes of the Church because of the very serious economic condition, but there has been an increase in the number of tithepayers, showing greater faith on the part of the people. I believe, however, that there is still opportunity for improvement in this respect. Our young people need to be taught and trained and encouraged to observe this principle, which is spiritual as well as economic, for their welfare and progress and faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Every boy and girl should be trained by their parents to pay tithing on whatever they may obtain in the way of earnings or gifts. They should be encouraged to try to earn regularly and to tithe such income. We are urging especially that every member of the Aaronic priesthood shall be taught the observance of this divine law. The decrease of tithes is due, as you will appreciate, to the fact that there has been much unemployment; and consequently those who have been unemployed have been unable to pay their tithes; and also very much by the low prices of commodities.

FACTORS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE FOR BETTER CONDITIONS

There are two economic factors at the present time in this community and throughout the nation, and I suppose throughout the world, that justify the greatest thought, attention and consideration and action on the part of those who have responsibility in government. They are of vital importance for the economic welfare of the people. One of these, which is more or less temporary, is the provision for emergency unemployment relief. That is being undertaken in a large measure throughout the nation by federal, state and local aid, and through various organizations. I wonder sometimes whether there is too much red tape attached to the obtaining of aid by those in need. Yet, of course, great care is necessary to see that those who need the aid

shall obtain it, and that those who are able to carry on without that aid will do so. It is a very vital thing to prevent hunger, with consequent difficulty and trouble that are bound to ensue if people do not have the necessities of life.

HIGHER COMMODITY PRICES

The other factor that is important in order that we may obtain better conditions and the only permanent means is that we may obtain higher prices for the staple raw commodities. How we are going to bring that about, whether by an appropriate method of reducing the value of the dollar, or in some other manner raising the value of commodities, is a very vital and important question that concerns all mankind at the present time. When the condition prevails that prices on raw commodities rise, the people of this state as well as of adjoining states and of the nation at large will be able to meet their obligations more fully, and carry on.

INDIVIDUALISM AND COOPERATION

I appreciate the fact that this Church, in the midst of these adverse conditions, is meeting the test of its efficiency and its divinity most effectively. The Church involves, as I see it, two phases of human activity. One is individualism and the other is co-operation. That may sound like a paradox. We know that our salvation depends upon our individual efforts. Except we do certain things, live in accordance with certain principles, and accept and conform to certain ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we cannot obtain the blessings, just as was referred to by President Clawson this morning relative to one of the Gospel ordinances. Salvation comes through observance of divine principles. So the individual can be saved only by his own acts.

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT AND INITIATIVE NECESSARY

At the same time the Gospel involves also co-operation and mutual helpfulness of all the members of the Church to produce results. No co-operative movement can be most successful except through individualism—that is through the individual development and activity of all concerned. If you will study any co-operative movement that has ever failed, you will find that where it has failed it was due to the fact that every individual was not measuring up to the standard expected and required. Where the individual has not measured up in energy, whole-heartedness and unselfishness, the movement has been weakened. So today in this and in all communities throughout the nation it is expected that every individual will use all of his powers and faculties in every way to try to save himself financially, spiritually, and in every other respect. But it requires also that we shall endeavor to co-operate to the fullest extent possible.

CO-OPERATIVE ACTION IN THE CHURCH

For instance, throughout the Church I think there never has been

such co-operation shown in helpfulness towards those in need as at the present time. The reports that come to us from all parts of the Church indicate that the presidencies of stakes and their associates, the bishoprics of wards, and those working under their direction, and the Relief Societies throughout the Church, are doing a tremendous work in the gathering of foodstuffs and taking care of the same for the benefit of those in need. Never was there, I think, such a spirit shown as at the present time of seeking to help those in need. Many of those who are in need are co-operating also in going out and helping to gather foodstuffs. They desire to work for what they get as far as it is possible to do so. There are, however, some who claim membership in the Church—and there are people outside of the Church, who feel that the world owes them a living and that others ought to do for them the things that they should do for themselves. There are those who do not take advantage of the present opportunities offered to obtain the necessities of life for themselves, strange as it may seem.

ALL SHOULD USE THEIR ENERGIES

There are ample food supplies throughout this country and generally within reasonable distance of those who need them, if they would but go out and gather the essentials and commodities which they need for their subsistence. They could get them almost for nothing and take care largely of themselves. I have not time to go into detail regarding these things, but call your attention to the fact that it is vitally important that everyone who is in distress and trouble should seek as far as possible to help himself.

THE WORTHY AND THE UNWORTHY

The Lord has made plain to us that those who are poor and are worthy, who are seeking to improve themselves, seeking to remedy their condition as far as possible, shall be blessed. But those “whose spirits are not contrite, whose hands are not stayed from laying hold upon other men’s goods, whose eyes are full of greediness, and who will not labor with their own hands” are subject to censure. They should use their own initiative and their own efforts. Likewise, those who are well-to-do who are not willing to impart of their means for the benefit of the poor, shall suffer, whereas the well-to-do who use their means effectively will receive blessings.

STAKES ORGANIZED FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

I would like to report to you briefly just a slight indication of all that is being done throughout the Church for the care of those in need. In this city, where probably the distress is greater than in almost any other part of the Church, four of the stakes have established storehouses. They have been sending out as many as hundreds of men at a time to gather food supplies, with the understanding that those who work and gather supplies will obtain orders on the storehouse for the things they

need. It is a very remarkable thing the way it is being done in these stakes, and the same is true largely in other stakes in the Church, although I have not the figures before me.

QUANTITIES OF SUPPLIES GATHERED

For instance, hundreds of thousands of pounds of potatoes, onions, cabbage, tomatoes and other vegetables, and various fruits, have been gathered and stored or distributed to those who are in distress. The perishable supplies have been distributed promptly. Other things that are not perishable are being stored for those who will be in need this winter. There has been considerable dried fruit prepared. In these four stakes alone without regard to what is being done in the Relief Societies in the various wards thereof, about 44,000 bottles or cans of fruit have been put up by the storehouses for the benefit of those who are or will be in need. There have been about 12,000 pieces of clothing gathered which are being repaired and remodeled for the benefit of those who are in need. Over four hundred pairs of shoes have been gathered; and wood and coal are being provided. It is a wonderful thing that is being done. The spirit of co-operation—the spirit of true religion—is being manifested by busy men and women sacrificing their own time and labor for the benefit of those in need. I am sure that if those who are going to receive this help will appreciate it, and will manifest their resourcefulness and their initiative in trying to carry on they will be able to go forward and gain relief from the economic distress that prevails at the present time.

CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TOLD TO GO FORWARD

I am reminded of the time when the Israelites were being led out of Egypt under Moses. They had gotten out of the land of Egypt and away from the rule of Pharaoh, and had reached the Red Sea when the Egyptians came after them. In the distance they saw the armies of the Egyptians pursuing them. They complained to Moses about the situation, saying in effect: "Why did you bring us into the desert here to be destroyed by the Egyptians, rather than to remain among them, and bear their tasks?" And Moses said: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Then he said: "The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." They were commanded not that they should "stand still," but that they should "go forward." We are told that a path was made through the Red Sea, and the children of Israel went forward promptly, and escaped the clutches of the Egyptians.

APPLICATION TO PRESENT CONDITIONS

In that experience it seems to me that there is a lesson for us today. We are surrounded by difficulties and troubles. We are pursued by conditions that are entirely unfavorable to us. Sometimes I think we

feel that we ought to stand before the Lord and ask him for blessings. That is, of course, entirely proper and necessary. But I think also it is important for us that we should go forward with confidence and faith, using our initiative, developing our resourcefulness, employing every possible means to remedy the conditions which prevail around us, individually and collectively, with the assurance that the more we try to do for ourselves the more the Lord will help us, because we are using our own faculties to remedy our condition. Thus we show our faith by our works.

GO FORWARD WITH COURAGE AND FAITH

Conditions are now and have been such with very many of us, that our attitude has been much the same as that of the Israelites in their fear and distress. Certainly, under the prevailing status, there is much reason for worry and strain. Many are carrying obligations that can be met with difficulty, if at all. Products of the farms can scarcely be sold for sufficient amounts to meet the requirements of the farmers. It is a situation which merits the mutual consideration and helpfulness of all concerned.

Yet, now is the time to "go forward." It is vitally necessary to employ all our faculties with resolution and initiative, to resist worry, to plan and work vigorously and systematically, to adjust our requirements to our resources, to cultivate increased faith in God, and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to face the present and the future with courage and determination. I am sure that if we will strive earnestly in this way, the way will be opened before us whereby we may carry on and have joy, satisfaction and peace.

I pray that the Lord may bless us all, that we may go forward with faith in him, using every power that he has given to us and every faculty, to the end that we may glorify his name and help to build up his kingdom, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sister Elsie Cook sang a sacred solo, entitled "Rest in the Lord."

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

First Counselor in the First Presidency

I have withheld the statistics that I am now about to read to you until the Presiding Bishop made his report.

TO RELIEVE DISTRESS

These figures show what has been done by the Church during the nine months from September 30th, 1931 to June 30th, 1932, in order that the distress to which he has referred might be relieved.

Ten Stakes of Salt Lake County, all within this valley, have contributed as follows:

From Fast offerings, \$34,026.86.

From Relief Society donations, \$28,470.56.