

ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Mexican Mission

I assure you, my brethren and sisters, that it will be an extreme relief for me to have this over and to sit in peace for the remainder of this conference. I have noticed that everybody who has sat close to me and been called on has felt just about as I have. I trust that the Lord will give me strength to bear to you a true and honest testimony and to say something that may be worth while, to encourage this congregation and to encourage me.

I need encouragement as much as any single member of this Church, and I thank God that in the past he has come to my rescue when I have most needed his aid. I pray that as the future comes he will never desert me or desert you.

I have enjoyed very much the words of this conference. I was especially pleased with what Dr. Harris said this morning about the youth of Zion. As Brother Hinckley told you this afternoon, our work as mission presidents brings us into direct contact with your sons and your daughters, and like Dr. Harris, I can bear testimony unto you that they are honest, true, sincere young people, and that the destiny of this work is safe in their hands. I feel it. I am sure of it. Of course it is our obligation to safeguard their growth and development that they may have this faith that is so necessary, that when they go into the world they may go in faith; that their lives may have been pure, so that they may be exemplary and be a light to the world.

The results of their efforts depend very largely upon the example which they set. It matters not so much what their learning may be. God will give them words when the time comes, if they are faithful, so that they may answer questions and preach sermons that will touch the hearts of the people with whom they come in contact. Not all people are touched by the same thing. Not all people can be approached by the same missionary. So that it takes them all to make a world; it takes them all to make successful campaigns in the mission field.

Sometimes we have missionaries come to us and we wonder where we will place them and what they will do, only to find, after they have been in the field a short time, that their very humility makes them our most useful instruments. They find people that other more educated, more illustrious, perhaps, missionaries would never touch; and after all, this Gospel is for the meek and the lowly, the humble and the poor; not, of course excepting the rich if they desire its benefits and blessings.

We have heard of the depression. We feel it in the mission field. I have nothing but honor and respect for the fathers and the mothers of our missionaries, who are undergoing the sacrifice, the deprivation that is sometimes necessary to keep their sons and daughters in the mission field. They are heroes, these mothers and fathers. They have faith, and it is that faith that has made it possible for their sons and daughters to go into the field and preach and proselyte as they do. I could give you many illustrations of the sacrifice that has been necessary

but that would perhaps be out of place at this time. But the parents are undergoing sacrifice, and I want those whose boys are in our mission field to understand that we appreciate that service to the very fullest and are grateful for it.

These boys and girls are carrying to the world a testimony of the Gospel. It is the greatest thing in the world. If it could be given to the world so they would all understand it our troubles would soon disappear. That testimony we are trying to give them.

The scripture has been read here in your hearing today, that eternal life consists in knowing God, the Eternal Father, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. If we knew God we would serve him, and serving him we would gain eternal life. It is just as sure and certain as that dawn follows darkness. It is upon the testimony of God that we found our work. Christ asked his disciples, after he had lived and labored among them:

"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

And in all his following there was perhaps only Peter that gave the answer that he desired:

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. * * * And upon this rock I will build my church."

What was it that was revealed to Peter? It was the identity of Christ as the Son of God the Father. He had been in their midst his lifetime, and there was none, perhaps, outside of Peter, that really realized and appreciated who he was; and Peter, during most of his association with Christ, had little idea of his real personality. "Upon this rock I will build my church"—upon the testimony that Christ is the Son of God, "I will build my church," is the way I like to interpret that.

When the time came that Christ's church should be established among the Nephite people, which was far from its native home, Christ himself came down among them and ministered unto them. He showed them his personality, his being, and when he left they had a testimony that Christ was and is the Son of the living God. They passed through many vicissitudes, just as did our brethren on the eastern continent, and the testimony of Christ passed from them.

The time came when it was necessary again to restore the Gospel to the earth, and the most important and all-embracing thing that happened was a revelation to Joseph Smith of God the Father and Jesus Christ. "Upon this rock will I build my church," upon the testimony of God and Christ, his Son.

That is the testimony that your sons and daughters are carrying to the world. That, to me, is the most important testimony that we have to give to the world, that Christ and God are real, actual personalities, who have an interest in us and in our well-being. If we will

adhere to that testimony and preach it boldly to the world—we do not have to do it in a manner that will offend, of course, but we must not fear to give that testimony when we go out—I am sure that in the end our purposes will be accomplished, that this work will prevail, that the great and glorious things that have been predicted of it will come to pass.

May God grant this and carry us through safely, I pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

“Doxology” was sung by the congregation, after which Elder Joseph Reece, Patriarch, Hollywood Stake, pronounced the benediction.

The Conference adjourned until 10 o'clock a. m., October 9.