

administered its affairs, notwithstanding the fact that they may have weaknesses.

God bless you, my brethren and sisters, keep us in the faith. Do not falter. The daydawn is breaking, when Christ our Lord shall come, not only to assume dominion over his Church, of which we form a part, but over the world at large. It was by church people—do not forget—that this government was founded and the foundations of it were laid. It was by church people that the War of Independence was fought. It has been by church people that it has been maintained, and it will be by church people that it shall be rescued from chaos, if it is rescued at all. God bless you. Amen.

A vocal solo, "O rest in the Lord," was sung by Mrs. C. G. VanOs.

### ELDER JOHN WELLS

#### *Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

My brethren and sisters, I sense deeply the responsibility that comes to any person who is called to express his thoughts to this large congregation.

This morning's session has been an inspiration to me. The program presented by the tabernacle choir has subdued my spirit, so much so that I feel the influence of this meeting more, it seems to me, than I have at any other time. I am thankful to be here, thankful that I am a Latter-day Saint, thankful that I have the privilege of mingling my voice in song and praise and prayer in this conference.

Let me first express my deep appreciation for my brethren who have passed away, Brother Brigham H. Roberts and Brother James E. Talmage. I became acquainted with Brother Roberts sometime in the year 1886, in England. He was then but thirty years of age. I admired him. He taught the Gospel to me as no other person had done previously. It was my privilege to sing for him as he preached the Gospel in the neighborhood where I lived. The second Sunday after I arrived in Salt Lake I heard Brother Talmage preach in the old 19th Ward chapel, and that sermon I shall always remember. His subject was: "Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me." Since the year 1889 we have been close friends. I miss both of these brethren.

I was glad that Aunt Susa Young Gates was remembered among those who have passed away since our last conference. She was my neighbor. Sister Gates was devoted to her religion. She had a wonderful understanding of the Gospel. I admired her for her devotion to this great work and the honor that she manifested toward the Priesthood.

At the Stake Clerks' meeting held yesterday I said that we do not need to be told anything new half so much as we need to be reminded of the things we already know. This thought has been constantly in my mind during the sessions of this conference.

The life of the Master is always most interesting to me. I like to follow his footsteps while he was here in mortality.

When the Master was traveling toward Caesarea Philippi accompanied by his disciples, a marvelous testimony came to them. He asked them the question: "Whom say ye that I am?" And they answered him, Peter being spokesman: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." After that he told them many things about his ministry, and particularly about his death. He admonished them in this manner:

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Evidently he was preparing these twelve men for their important duties in the establishment of his Church.

On another occasion a rich young man, a ruler among the Jews, came to him seeking instructions. I will read what Matthew has recorded regarding the incident:

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

"And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

I have thought of that as the keynote of this conference.

"He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness.

"Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"The young man saith unto him, all these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

Let us consider these incidents in the light of our present conditions.

Depressions like the one we are passing through come periodically. We are never prepared for them. We soon forget the experiences of previous depressions. We again ride on the high tide of prosperity for a few years, followed by another reaction similar to the present one. The living conditions of every person in the country have been affected. Property values have fallen. The selling price of the products of the soil and the mill have been materially reduced and the purchasing power of the people seriously impaired.

It has been stated that when Martin Luther commenced his great reform movement (which after all was a preparatory movement for the establishment of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith) the Pope sent word to a high church official to "stop that monk's mouth with gold." This official reported back: "The fool doesn't love gold." Was he a fool? I believe not. There are many things more valuable and more lasting than the possession of wealth. Piteable is the poverty of the soul of one who works

for earthly riches alone. The great elevating force in our lives is our spiritual growth.

Those who are in business or who follow commercial pursuits require an accounting from time to time to ascertain whether or not the business or pursuit they follow is profitable. At frequent intervals an inventory is taken of the condition of the business. A statement of the business is prepared. If he is a wise business man, he will closely examine the balance sheet which will show his assets and liabilities. This is the usual routine of commercial life.

It has been said by many that the merchant or business man who never takes an inventory nor has prepared for him a balance sheet, will run the risk of becoming bankrupt through ignorance of the condition of his business; and so I say that a man who never takes an inventory and balance sheet of himself will run the risk of intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy.

We are now in the last quarter of the year. Like other years, it began with new hopes, new resolutions and perhaps a few new opportunities. Would it not be proper for us to take an inventory of our general conduct as Latter-day Saints and see if we are increasing our spiritual assets and decreasing our spiritual liabilities?

Brother Nephi Jensen has given a definition of *spirituality*:

"Spirituality is that liveliness of spirit that intensifies appreciation of the beautiful, deepens loyalty to truth and kindles love for the good; it puts the heart in harmony with the moral forces of the world; promotes delight in the realization of high ideals; and quickens in the heart the joyous glory of being in actual partnership with God in the purification and ennoblement of mankind."

We are all familiar with the Master's injunction:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal, but rather lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

Now does our spiritual balance sheet show that we have been more helpful in the stake and ward where we live? Does it show that we have developed those priceless attributes, dependability and loyalty? Does it show that we have observed the Sabbath day and kept it holy; that we have paid our tithes and offerings? Can the people about us say that we are good neighbors? Does this balance sheet show that we have kept the Word of Wisdom? Does it show that we have done all that has been required of us in the service of the Lord and his Church? If so, we are increasing in spirituality and our assets are growing.

Now let us examine the other side of the balance sheet. Our spiritual liabilities will increase when we do not observe the Sabbath day, when we are law breakers, when we fail to pay an honest tithing to the Lord, when we fail to keep the Word of Wisdom, and when others have to labor with us to keep us interested in the Church. If our

spiritual liabilities are increasing, isn't it time to ask ourselves the question:

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Several years ago there came into my possession a leaflet which contained the following questions: Am I really and truly interested in my membership in the Church? What am I doing to prove that interest? How do I look to the man on the outside? Can he tell by my actions that I am living the Gospel? Am I a good example for anyone to follow? Would my Bishop classify me as useful, active, faithful, or would he classify me as just one of his members?

My brethren and sisters, let us see that our spiritual assets are increasing and that our spiritual liabilities are decreasing; that in spite of poverty, disappointments and financial reverses, we do increase in faith, keeping always in mind the saying of the Master, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We can show our love for the Master by keeping his commandments.

I am thankful for the Gospel, for my membership in the Church, for the testimony that has come to me. I testify to you that I know this is the work of God, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of the living God, that he was raised up to stand at the head of this great dispensation of the fulness of times.

Let us constantly remind ourselves of our obligation to our Father in Heaven, to this Church, and to one another, that we may grow in spiritual power and usefulness in this great latter-day work, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## ELDER ELIAS S. WOODRUFF

*President of the Western States Mission*

I believe that this is the eleventh time that I have had the privilege of representing the Western States Mission before a congregation in this tabernacle, and it is the last time that I shall have that privilege, since I have been transferred into another field of labor. I have had extreme pleasure in the labor that has been assigned to me, and Sister Woodruff has enjoyed it with me. We have had a very pleasant experience. We have labored in the mission among many happy people in a delightful part of the country. Our experiences have been of great benefit and blessing to us. We are very grateful for them.

I should like to take this opportunity to say a few things about that mission that I hope will be interesting to you and appropriate to this occasion. In the first place let me speak a word with reference to the city of Denver. I had no idea of the beauty of that city until I went there to live nor of the fine people who live there, and the splendid spirit of civic pride apparent in that city. On every hand we have met with