

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

"Great and marvelous are thy ways and thy works, O Lord, our God!"

This expresses my feelings as I have sat through the various sessions of this conference, and listened to the words of the various speakers, and felt the impress of the Spirit of the Lord which has been with us; and as I sat with you this morning and listened to the beautiful musical rendition by the tabernacle choir, with the accompanying music, which was broadcast throughout these United States and possibly beyond its borders into other nations of the earth, and the islands of the sea, which is quite possible by the means which have been employed by men in this day and time.

FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GOD'S WORK

One may say: Why, these are but the inventions of man. Yes, they are the inventions of man, inspired of God for his honor and glory and the accomplishment of his work in the earth. The Savior, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, spoke of the time of his second coming, and said he:

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

That was to immediately precede the great and dreadful day of the Lord, the ushering in of a millennial reign of peace.

For more than a hundred years the Latter-day Saints, on whom rests this responsibility, have been engaged in the preaching of the Gospel with more or less of success. We are here, as a congregation of Latter-day Saints, as the result of the preaching of this Gospel in the nations of the earth. We are here located in the valleys of the mountains, having gathered from the nations of the earth through the preaching of the Gospel.

The Lord without a doubt has inspired those men of inventive genius, who have brought forth the radio and this broadcasting, for his own purpose, and I think I can see how that in a very short time this Gospel of the kingdom may reach into every nation, to every kindred, tongue and people, in all parts of the world. We are already using this system of preaching the Gospel in a number of the mission fields, and from Salt Lake City. Marvelous indeed are the works of God. No man can fully comprehend them.

WORK NOT RETARDED

As remarks were made with reference to our brethren of the General Authorities who have recently departed this life, my mind has run back over the history of the Church since the days of the Prophet Joseph and the Patriarch Hyrum, who gave their lives for the Gospel's

sake. When the Prophet and the Patriarch were martyred there was a feeling among a great many people that their death would end this work, commonly known as Mormonism. But the blood of the prophets has proven to be the seed of the Church, and there was no retarding of the work, but it broadened out and extended, under the leadership of President Brigham Young, the legal successor to the Prophet Joseph, and those associated with him, and they passed on. And still the work persisted, with no evidence of its being retarded in the least. And so from one presidency to another, six of them having passed away, and the work goes on and gets stronger and stronger, greater in numbers, better and more thoroughly organized, and with greater accomplishments.

Now, these good brethren of ours whom we have dearly loved, with whom we have associated so closely and have known so well for their virtues and their worth, have passed on. They belong to another world and have another life of activity to live. While they lived here such a thing as rest and recreation were scarcely known to these two men, indefatigable laborers for the cause of truth, for the cause of the Master, in studying, in preaching the Gospel, and in writing books, they scarcely had any peers in this Church. We will miss them of course, but will the work be retarded? Not at all.

THE WORK OF GOD

And why this condition of stability and uninterrupted progress from the inception of the work down to the present time? Because of the greatness, the bigness and the magnitude of this work, being God's work, and his arm and hand are over it. He is at the helm and giving direction. Men haven't made this great work that we are engaged in, "Mormonism," so-called. But this work has made men of renown, noblemen such as these our brethren who have recently passed beyond. That is the glory of this work, the greatness of it, the bigness of it. Nothing like it in all the world! It is the biggest thing known to man.

The Latter-day Saints have no serious objection to the use of the word "Mormonism," notwithstanding the name was given to us by those who are not of us, who never intended it for a compliment. We understand that the word "Mormon" in itself means "more good," and the word "Mormonism" is comprehensive, in that it stands for the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which in very deed is the power of God unto salvation.

More minutely described we might say it is the plan of the Gods for the existence of this world, this earth on which we live; and for man's existence upon the earth; for man's fall, for that was considered in the plan in the beginning, and for the fall of the earth; for the redemption of man and the redemption of the earth; for the glorifying of the earth, for it is to be renewed and receive its paradisaical glory; and for the eternal life and exaltation of man.

FOR THE SALVATION OF MAN

As the Lord talked to his servant Moses he made plain to him his plans and purposes concerning his creations, and told him that they were for the accomplishment of man's salvation.

"Behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

The Gospel was instituted for this purpose. The Prophet Joseph tells us that we were all present in the council of heaven; that we sat in council with the Gods; that we saw the plan of salvation made, and the Savior chosen and appointed, and we sanctioned it. We must have had a long period of life and experience in the spirit world to have been able to sit in council with the Gods upon such momentous questions. We must have understood the plans and purposes of the Lord, and we must have subscribed to them. Every man that has been born in the flesh came with a definite understanding that he was to work out his salvation according to the plan of the Gospel, that he might attain the blessings of eternal life and exaltation. It involves the acceptance of certain principles, the receiving of certain ordinances, the obeying of the laws of God, the keeping of his commandments, the making of sacrifice, the rendering of service, the denying ourselves of that which is evil, the acceptance of that which is good.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Our remembrance of the past was taken away, and in the language of the scripture, we must live while here in the flesh by faith and not by sight. But we have had the word and will of God revealed to us, through his prophets whom he has raised up, so that we are not in the dark. As we have investigated and have received the Gospel, we have received a testimony of its truth, and with it a responsibility for the carrying on of this work looking to the saving of the souls of men. It involves the preaching of this Gospel in all the world. It involves the building of temples and the redeeming of the dead. It involves the organizing, as we are organized, as a great Church, for the proper teaching and training of our children, for the finishing, we might say, of the conversion of those who have been gathered in from the world.

Even in the world where we have these organizations they are to prepare men and women in the faith and integrity and ability to engage in this work. Every man and every woman that comes into the Church, every convert, is expected of the Lord to be a missionary for him, whether he be called to labor at home or abroad, or having no calling whatever specially given unto him.

The word of the Lord is to the effect that he that is warned is to warn his neighbor. Every young man in this Church ought to have an ambition to go upon a mission, realizing that all that he has and enjoys of the Gospel and hope of eternal life is the result of the preaching of this Gospel; that if we have not ourselves heard it in the world for the

first time, and been converted, our parents or our grandparents or our great-grandparents have, and we are partaking of the fruits of their sacrifices and their labors. We should have a desire to pay the debt of gratitude we feel for the Gospel, by imparting the knowledge we have of it to those who are in spiritual darkness.

A SECOND OBLIGATION

One important obligation resting upon us as a Church is to get missionaries, and another important obligation is that of looking after them when they return. There are men who have left remunerative positions of labor to go upon missions, and when they have returned they have walked the streets of Salt Lake City, and have gone from city to city seeking in vain for employment, and some of them having families to maintain. That is a very regrettable condition and discouraging to others who contemplate going upon missions.

I think it is serious when a High Priests' quorum can not help a returning High Priest, or a quorum of Seventies will allow one of their members returning from a mission to go months and years without desired and deserved employment. They ought to have that spirit of brotherhood and helpfulness that they would either furnish employment for him or help him to find employment.

MEETING THE EMERGENCY

The shortage of missionaries creates an emergency in the mission field today. One way of meeting this emergency is that of utilizing more fully the labors of the brethren and sisters who are residents in the missions, in the preaching of the Gospel. A local man may accompany an elder from Zion, and make a full team of two in tracting or doing any other kind of missionary work. If that were carried out as it might be, it would double our corps of missionaries, and it would build up the Saints who might be thus engaged.

Another thing: Many of our missionaries in the field spend too much of their time in visiting the Saints, in settling difficulties among them, and encouraging those who are indifferent in the faith, all of which is necessary, but it should be done as far as possible by local men and women, that the regular missionaries may be at liberty to find new friends and preach the Gospel to them.

Branches should be organized with teachers as they are in the wards and branches in Zion, with local men and women who go into the homes of the Saints regularly and make an effort at keeping peace, settling difficulties, answering troublesome questions, etc.

There is some opportunity for improvement, and I think the exigencies of the case demand an extra effort along these lines by those who have the work in charge.

WORK FOR THE DEAD

Then there is the work for the dead. That is one of the things that is required of us—service for God and our fellow-men. There is

no better way of serving God and our fellow men than that of working for the redemption of our dead in genealogical research and in temple work. They go hand in hand. The temple work for the dead can not be accomplished without first obtaining the information such as is necessary to identify them upon the records of the Church and in the temples. This work is growing and increasing, which is very gratifying.

There are a great many people who are out of work and who are wasting their time, who could go to the temple and be laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, treasures that would not slip away from them, and at the same time be saving the souls of men and women.

There are people who are living far distant from the temples and can not very well get to the temples. You would do well to spend a little of your money in genealogical research from a distance, by writing the Genealogical Society of Utah, giving them a few items of information pertaining to your ancestors, and see what they can do for you in the way of genealogical research. Then, if you can not go to the temple, perhaps there are some in the community in which you live who are in need of employment, who could go to the temple. Give them some relief by employing them to represent you and at the same time you will be spending your money in the redemption of the dead.

A GOSPEL OF SERVICE

This Gospel is a Gospel of work, of service to God and our fellowmen, from beginning to end. It is not sufficient that we be simply good, or that we ourselves embrace the principles and ordinances of the Gospel, but we are to teach them to others and administer the ordinances thereof to those who are prepared to receive them, all things being done in proper order.

May the Lord bless the Latter-day Saints, that we may be able to understand our responsibilities, and be able to discharge them in a way that will be satisfactory to the Lord, who knows what we are doing and what we are not doing, and in a way that when we have finished this life we will not meet with disappointment; that when we go on the other side and meet our dead we will not be reproached for having neglected them. May the Lord help us to this end, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

President Castle H. Murphy of the Hawaiian Mission has been in the hospital for a week and has been confined to his home another week. He has cabled us that he is now able to continue with his work and sends greetings and *aloha* to the Authorities and the Saints.

I am sorry that the good people who are listening to these services over the radio will be deprived of the privilege of hearing the last song by the choir, as I understand that the radio broadcasting company will shut us off the air promptly at four o'clock. I am going to rob the choir