

president of the company told me this, and extended his sympathy to me when I met him after the death of my mother.

Talk about sacrifice! Why, the sacrifice of the women of this Church and their devotion are beyond the power of pen and tongue of man to pay proper tribute.

May God help us to follow the teaching and example of our mothers who are true Latter-day Saints, and there will be an eternity of joy and an exaltation in store for each and every one of us; and that we may receive it is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, our Redeemer, even so. Amen.

At the request of President Heber J. Grant the congregation arose and sang the hymn, "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I appreciate very much the excellent testimony that has been given to us this morning and the wonderful tribute paid by President Grant to his mother. So I also can pay a tribute to my mother, and I treasure in my heart her teachings, which have helped me so wonderfully and have been a guide to my path, and I think that most of us could testify likewise.

This morning I would like to address my remarks more particularly to the presidents of stakes and bishops of wards, and all presiding officers, and the clerks who are called upon to keep the records in the stakes and wards and missions of the Church.

• IMPORTANCE OF RECORD-KEEPING

Record-keeping is very important. When the Church was organized one of the first revelations that the Lord gave was to the effect that records should be kept, a record of the members, a record of events, everything of importance, and one of the brethren was chosen to be the recorder. He was Oliver Cowdery. Later, because of other duties, this responsibility was placed upon the shoulders of another. But the Lord has emphasized from the beginning the need of keeping records in the Church. In fact we read in the marvelous records that have come to us through revelation that in the beginning the Lord gave this commandment to men.

I want to read a verse from the Pearl of Great Price, perhaps more than one:

And then began these men to call upon the name of the Lord, and the Lord blessed them

This was in the days of Adam and his immediate posterity.

And a book of remembrance was kept, in the which was recorded, in the language of Adam, for it was given unto as many as called upon God to write by the spirit of inspiration;

And by them their children were taught to read and write, having a language which was pure and undefiled.

Now this same priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also.

Now this prophecy Adam spake, as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and a genealogy was kept of the children of God. And this was the book of the generations of Adam, saying: In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

In the image of his own body, male and female, created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created and became living souls in the land upon the footstool of God.

Abraham has also given, in the writings that have come to us from him, a statement that I also want to read:

But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood, the Lord my God preserved in mine own hands; therefore a knowledge of the beginning of the creation, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers, have I kept even unto this day, and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me.

We are very fortunate in the fact that these worthies who held the Priesthood and were in communication with God in those ancient times did receive inspiration and revelation, and recorded the word of the Lord to them which has come down to us, much of it of course in a corrupted form, but nevertheless the word of the Lord, and we have profited because of it.

Today the Lord has spoken and has again given revelations to the Church, and is now giving revelations to the Church; in fact we have received more apparently than we are willing to keep, and yet the Lord is willing and ready to bless us with inspiration and knowledge and truth.

In section fifty-nine of the Doctrine and Covenants he says that he will give us commandments not a few when we are ready to receive them.

Now I want to impress upon those who are keeping records in this Church the importance of record-keeping. We are trying to get the clerks to follow the instruction which has been given them and send to us a detailed history of the stakes, and we want the clerks in the wards to keep a detailed history of the wards, and furnish information to us quarterly, that we may file it in the archives of the Church. We are asking presidents of stakes and bishops of wards, also mission presidents, to carefully supervise and scrutinize these prepared histories of the missions and stakes and wards, and then sign with their own names the history before it comes to be filed in the archives of the Church, stating that to their best knowledge and understanding that which is written is correct. We want them to see that everything of importance is recorded. We are under the necessity very frequently of sending letters out to a great many of the stakes and some of the missions and asking them to see that the history which is delinquent is forwarded. We would like to have these records sent to us on time.

INFORMATION FURNISHED BY HISTORIAN

Frequently, yes, hardly a week passes that people do not write

to us or come into the office seeking information concerning themselves. They want to know when they were baptized, they want to know when they were ordained, and sometimes they want to know when they were born—that isn't a joke, it is an actual fact. We receive communications from the Government sometimes asking us to verify records of this kind. I think that every member of the Church ought to keep a record of vital things for himself. When a man is baptized he should make a record of it. When he is confirmed, when he is ordained, when other duty or responsibility or call comes to him he should make a record of it and keep it himself; but it is also the duty of the clerk in the ward or in the stake, as the case may be, to also make a record of this and have it put into the history of the ward or stake, where it can be preserved.

We can furnish a great deal of information for people if they do not want us to go back too far. The early records of the Church were not kept as thoroughly as they should have been. We have learned a great many things by experience. Today our records are kept in a much better way, and yet at times things escape the notice of those who are called to make the records.

Now this is a vital problem. We should not depend solely upon the Church to keep our individual records, and yet the individual record of each member of the Church today is kept. The Presiding Bishop's office is working in full harmony with the Historian's office in regard to matters of this kind and through them we are enabled to keep in better touch with these officers who are appointed to keep the records than we would be if we did not have the machinery of the bishops often at our command.

RECORDER'S OFFICE AN IMPORTANT ONE

Now, brethren, I am appealing to the presidents of stakes and bishops to see that these records are properly kept. Let me say further that the choosing of a clerk and recorder is a very important thing. Sometimes we think that anybody can keep a record. It requires intelligence to do so. A man ought to have keen discernment, he ought to be able to segregate facts, he ought to be able to choose and record the things that are important and separate them from the things that are perhaps unimportant, and make a record of them. Our custom in recording is to take more than we need rather than less. We can always eliminate if something is recorded that we do not need, but it is sometimes a very difficult thing to find something that we have overlooked.

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

And so I am making this appeal at this general conference of the Church to all the members of the Church to keep their records, the records of their families, to look after the interests of their families in regard to their temple work as well as to their individual records. The Lord has called upon us to look after our dead, to seek out their genealogy. This spirit has gone forth, the keys that were bestowed by Elijah

are here, and the hearts of the children have turned to their fathers. One of the greatest evidences of the truth of the story told by the Prophet Joseph Smith that Elijah came to him and Oliver Cowdery is the fact that people who are not connected with this Church, who have no sympathy perhaps with the Church, are gathering the records of the dead. Their hearts have turned to the fathers. Our duty of course is to seek after our dead. We have a department in the Church, the Genealogical Society of Utah, where we are gathering in these records for the benefit of the members of the Church, where we can receive information, and are able to give help and encouragement in relation to these matters that pertain to the salvation of our families.

PATRIARCHAL RECORDS AND PRIVATE JOURNALS

All patriarchal records belong to the Church and not to the patriarchs who gave the blessings. Neither do they belong to the families of the patriarchs. When a patriarch has completed his record, or when he dies, the record should be sent to the Historian's office to be filed. Many of these records have not been received, and in some instances the descendants of the patriarchs have claimed them as personal property, and this is wrong. Moreover, there are many important private journals scattered about which we would like to obtain for preservation and for historical purposes. We discover that when these are left in the keeping of the descendants of the pioneers, they frequently are lost, or lose their value by the time they reach the third or fourth generation, and are thrown away. If they are given to us we will file them away where they will be preserved.

May the Lord bless and guide us in these things. They are important. We sometimes look upon them as being trivial. The Lord expects us to keep records and to put in permanent form all things that pertain to our welfare in relation to our history, individually as well as the history of the Church. May we be guided in it, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER DAVID O. MCKAY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

It is just twenty-eight years since I was called into the Council of the Twelve. As I listened to President Grant this morning I looked introspectively into my own soul, and thought this:

"Never before in my life have I felt so grateful for my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Never before have I felt more intensively how beneficial the Church has been to me and my loved ones. Never before has my testimony been stronger. Never have I felt so deeply in every fiber of my being that this Church was established by God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, and that the men who have guided its destiny have been inspired by the revelations of God to them."