

down by God our Father for the government of this world and man, and while he sojourns in it.

I think we should not be afraid of scrutiny and of friendly criticism; we should welcome it. Man can be saved only so far as he gains intelligence and understanding and exercises faith. Consequently, I welcome criticism if it is made in the proper light and spirit. Unfriendly criticism, injimical criticism perhaps is not to be desired because it is always prejudiced in advance and never sees a question fairly. That is the one thought and idea I had in mind in coming to this stand. I give it to you for what it is worth.

I pray God our Heavenly Father that he will sustain each and all of us, that we may carry forward with our heads erect, with a firm tread, to a successful culmination of our careers. May God bless us to this end, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

#### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

In the few moments that I stand before you I pray that I may have the inspiration of God to lead me to say that which he would have me say upon this occasion.

Perhaps it would be well for me to report my missionary experiences, or some of them. Thirty years ago last month I was called on a mission to the Central States and went into the mission the latter part of the year. I think I have attended the general conferences fifty-four times in that period of time. I have seen many things that have strengthened my testimony and proved to me without a doubt that this is the work of God. I went into the mission field with a testimony of the Gospel—I knew it was true before I left home. It was an undeveloped testimony, it is true; I had had no experience in the preaching of the Gospel, but I realized its truth as revealed from heaven in these the last days. It came to me from my parentage and those pioneers who were led into the valleys of the mountains under the direction of Brigham Young and who fought the Indians and helped to establish these settlements in these valleys. Coming of that lineage I could not but have a testimony because of the things that I had seen.

It has been a great privilege which I have enjoyed to be associated with the thousands of men and women I have met in the mission field—fine men, clean in their lives, and good women. There were more than 2500 of them—a great congregation from all over the Church, and they labored with me and with my good wife in the mission field. I was thinking a few days ago about the success that has come to the Church through the ministry of this fine, noble band of men and women. There were fewer than three quarters of one per cent of those 2500 missionaries who returned home without an honorable release. There were fewer than three-fourths of one per cent who lost their lives in the mission field. I handled all the funds that came to the mission in all the years we were

there. They deposited their money in the mission office and we kept it for them. There was a loss of less than twenty-five cents per missionary during all that time. That covered loss on books, literature and money that was furnished. They paid their bills. There are few banks in the world with that many accounts that could say they had not lost more than that amount. I doubt if there are any banks that could say it. In addition to that, when the mission was turned over to President Woodruff every penny of the funds on hand belonging to missionaries was returned to them, and there was not one of them who owed the mission anything. There had not been an overdraft for more than five years.

That group of missionaries baptized over 11,000 people, over 9000 of them being adult converts, not children. They worked hard and faithfully, and I give this testimony to the children of men today that it may occupy a place in the history of this Church, and may stand to the honor and the truth and the integrity of the men and women of the Church, covering a period of twenty-six or twenty-seven years. Most of these missionaries are now actively engaged at home. Some of them could be more diligent it is true, but perhaps that isn't altogether their fault. Since returning home I have found them, when I have visited the stakes, serving in stake presidencies, as bishops, bishops' counselors, in the auxiliary associations; and in all the places that men and women have been called to occupy. They are engaged in positions of trust and in presiding capacities everywhere. This is true of representatives of all the missions; I know this about those of the Central States, but I am quite sure it could be said about all the missions of the Church.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will never fail. It has steadily grown in membership, and it has steadily grown in faith. The integrity of the men and women today who go out into the mission field is just as great as it was twenty-five years ago.

There is a great spirit of friendship in the world, and there ought to be. We ought not to meet the opposition that we did a hundred years ago, when those mighty men under the leadership of Joseph the Prophet and Brigham Young fought so hard for the establishment of the Church and its standards. It was the very opposite of what the people were being taught at that time. But a continuation of the practices and teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has brought about a change in the hearts of the children of men. It will continue to be so. I know that we will be tempted by the Evil One, as Brother Ivins so well stated this morning. I think that Lucifer will fight with more vigor from now on than he has ever fought before, but so will God our Eternal Father. The battle that was begun in that world from which we came is still going on. The men and women who fought for the principles of right before the foundations of this earth were laid have been in the earth in the past and are today, carrying on under the leadership of Jesus Christ our Lord. They are fighting for the right, for the establishment of God's work and to bring about the plan that he intended should be accomplished when he sent his children into the world.

There is a fine opportunity for this work to continue. I am not the

least bit discouraged about the things we hear—the things that might appear to hinder the progress of this Church. There is nothing worth while in the world that we can get easily; we have to work for it. It will demand the support and attention of every one who takes part in the Church to do that for which the Lord has sent us into the world—the carrying on of this Gospel at home and abroad, so as to fulfil the purposes of the Almighty as planned by his servants, prophesied by his prophets, and taught by those who went out under his name.

I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I know that Brigham Young was the great leader that history says he was. I never knew him except as I have read about him. I was not intimately acquainted with those who followed him, although I remember John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow. But my ministry, my intimate association with the leadership of this Church, began with President Joseph F. Smith, and has continued with President Heber J. Grant. I have seen these men on the firing line out in the world, I have seen them at home, and I want to tell you that the integrity of the Church under the leadership of the men who have been placed at its head cannot be questioned. If the world had what we have, if the world could preach what we preach, I tell you the institutions of learning would be changed everywhere. The power of the Holy Ghost has never come to them: when it does it will make them powerful and great agencies for truth.

I bear you my testimony that this is the work of God. I am glad to be home again in the bosom of the Church, visiting in the stakes, and to find the men and women there that I do find, associated in the different organizations. It has been a great pleasure to visit the various stakes and see the young folks of the Church take their part in the different auxiliary organizations, and also in the Priesthood circles that I have come in contact with. I am happy to be here. I know that the work of God is safe in the hands of the Priesthood of this Church. I care not for the attacks of the outside. Jesus Christ our Lord won in the beginning and he will win in the end. He did it with his sons and his daughters before, and he will do it now, for this is his work and it cannot be frustrated. Amen.

### ELDER JOHN H. TAYLOR

#### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

In these days of indecision, uncertainty, and confusion concerning the things that have to do with the economic life of the country, concerning education and science, it is not remarkable that men's hearts begin to fail them when they stop to consider the question of religion. It seems as though men are running to and fro, trying to find their way out, but because of the darkness it is more difficult than they anticipated to get into the sunshine again.

As Latter-day Saints we have faith in God the Eternal Father and in this great work which has been established in our day. But even with