

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

When President Holger M. Larson spoke yesterday concerning the work of the Saints and missionaries in the Danish Mission, I recalled the time when I wandered through the campus and buildings of the University at Copenhagen. Above the gate of that great institution is an eagle sculptured in marble, and underneath an inscription in Latin which translated into English says: "The eagle is looking toward the celestial light." Every student takes off his cap as he passes through the gate, on his way to the lecture hall, and he keeps in mind for the day that lovely thought: "We will keep our eyes toward the celestial light." What a beautiful ideal for the youth.

On the 17th of September, 1887, a great celebration was held in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia in honor of the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. The President of the United States, Grover Cleveland, and other distinguished guests were present on that occasion. A chorus of one thousand people rendered the beautiful poem of the German poet Schiller, entitled "An Appeal to Truth," which had been put to music by Mendelssohn. As they sang the lines of the poem: "Upon the divine truth of the freedom of man and the knowledge of God, does our civilization stand," the guests stood with bowed heads in gratitude for the blessings of the Lord. Then President Cleveland arose and among other things said: "When we look down one hundred years and see the origin of our Constitution, when we contemplate all its trials and triumphs, when we realize how completely the principles upon which it is based have met every national need and every national peril, how devoutly should we say with Franklin, 'God governs in the affairs of men,' and how solemn should be the thought that to us is delivered this ark of the people's covenant and to us is given the duty to shield it from impious hands . . . Another centennial day will come, and millions yet unborn will inquire concerning our stewardship and the safety of the Constitution. God grant that they may find it unimpaired."

Today, there are forces at work to undermine this sacred gift of our fathers. These forces are expressed in acts and words of disrespect for law, order, and authority. Lord Macaulay feared for our democratic institutions, and once expressed the thought that institutions purely democratic "must sooner or later, destroy liberty or civilization, or both." In reply to this thought of the great English essayist, we can only say that we hope that the citizens of our great republic will have from age to age a finer reverence and greater love for the principles of human rights which are set forth in the Constitution of our country.

When our fathers wrote the Declaration of Independence and gave us the divine thought: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by

their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," we must ever remember that there are no rights that are not duties. The Declaration of Independence was not justified if it was not obligatory. So this is true with the still greater document of government, the Constitution of the United States. "There are no rights that are not duties."

The Prophet Isaiah once wrote: "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn," and the ancient Psalmist of Zion warned us when he said: "Remove not the ancient land-mark, which thy fathers have set." I believe that the life of America depends upon the religion of America, and if this our government is to be preserved, it will be because America is pervaded, inspired, and controlled by the spirit of a faith in Almighty God. Our country was settled by people imbued by deep religious convictions. When the Pilgrim fathers came and landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620, they drew up the Mayflower Compact which in part reads: "In the Name of God, Amen. We whose names are written, the loyal subjects of our Lord, King James, by the Grace of God King . . . having undertaken for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith . . ." "In the name of God" those Pilgrim fathers braved the terrors of the deep to plant homes in America and to establish religious freedom. The Quakers came to Pennsylvania, the Catholics to Maryland, and the Methodists to the Carolinas. James Oglethorpe who brought colonists to Georgia required that his people draw up a form of government based on the fundamentals that were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai: the Ten Commandments. This nation must naturally be pervaded by a spiritual life, and we have today no more important duty than to inspire the youth with a true religious spirit. When the First Continental Congress met in Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia in September, 1774, Dr. Jacob Duche was called in to offer prayers, and as he prayed, John Adams of Massachusetts tells us that tears "gushed into the eyes of all present." This prayer I want to quote to you in full:

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of Kings, Lord of Lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers upon the earth, and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all kingdoms, empires and governments, look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, upon these American States who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves upon Thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only upon Thee.

To Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause. To Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care. Give them wisdom in council and valor in the field. Defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Convince them of the unrighteousness of their cause, and if they still persist in their sanguinary purpose, O let the voice of Thine own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop their weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle.

Be Thou present, O Lord of Wisdom, and direct the Council of the honorable Assembly. Enable them to settle things upon the best and surest

foundation, that the scene of blood may speedily be closed; that order, harmony and peace may effectually be restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety, prevail and flourish amongst Thy people.

Preserve the health of their bodies, the vigor of their minds. Shower down upon them and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Saviour. Amen.

We are right in saying that our government had its beginning with a people who had faith in God and his work. After the American Revolution, people began to cross the mountains to the West, and after 1800 they read the Bible and had deep faith in its teachings. In 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized as a result of the Priesthood of God which was restored from heaven to Joseph Smith. Then came the march across the continent, which ended in the settlement of the far West. Methodists and Presbyterians went to Oregon; Catholic priests carried the message of the Cross into all parts of the northwest; the Latter-day Saints redeemed the desert waste of the Great Basin. Every one of the migrations was inspired by the belief that God and the message of the Redeemer of the world must be taught to the Indians.

I believe that in the heart of the average American there is a deep religious conviction. Our nation has a religious life which must be maintained in determining national questions and controlling national policy. The spirit of mutual respect and good will, of justice and peace, of human brotherhood, is the spirit of the Christian religion, and this spirit teaches us one and all that the object of political activity is not merely to vote or to take sides in elections, but to direct our thoughts and deeds to noble actions and Christian principles. For this reason, we must educate the youth in an understanding of freedom and democracy; we must teach them that the perpetuity of our government depends on a deep conviction of the reality of the kingdom of God and the spiritual quality of life. We Latter-day Saints believe implicitly in the kingdom of God and that in time it will be established upon the earth with Christ our Lord as King. No more beautiful ideal of government can be known than this. The unity of Christianity is dependent upon the teachings concerning the kingdom and the life of the Savior—the divine birth and the atonement; the resurrection and the assurance that Christ our Lord will come again. In this teaching is envisaged the kingdom of God which becomes our vision. So America has a dream, a vision, the purpose of which is to cause us to understand the spiritual quality of life, for all our civilization must be a spiritual achievement. "Look unto the rock from whence ye are hewn, and remove not the ancient land-mark which thy fathers have set." May the Lord help us to look to the rock and to stand by the land-marks of justice, faith, and the knowledge of the living God. May the Constitution of the United States be preserved and sanctified in the hearts of all Americans. It

was George Washington who replied to a question as to whether or not the people would support the Constitution. "Let us raise a standard," said he, "to which the wise and just can repair; the rest is in the hand of God."

May we live for the right; and do what we can to live nearer the kingdom of God. May we do everything we can to preserve the integrity of the Constitution of the United States. May we look toward the celestial light. Amen.

The choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O ye mountains high."

ELDER MELVIN J. BALLARD

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

And again:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. * * * *

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

A LESSON FROM A LIFE SERMON

I believe that the most powerful sermon any of us shall ever preach will be the sermon of our lives. I should like to draw a lesson that I feel is needed just now, from the life sermon of President Anthony W. Ivins. I recall that one of the most impressive things that touched my life was an act of his years ago. If I refer to something that is personal it is but to teach the lesson that I should like to present to you.

Years ago, as a young man, I was active in the same political party to which President Ivins belonged. From a convention about the time Utah became a state an invitation was sent to President Ivins to accept the nomination as Governor of the state. He could have it by unanimous vote, but he declined it and turned aside from that very inviting offer full of promises and hopes, to accept a call from his Church to break up his home in southern Utah and go to Old Mexico and suffer financial loss through colonizing in that very difficult place. This act of this man