

ELDER J. GOLDEN KIMBALL

Of the First Council of the Seventy

As some of you know, I have been absent for a short time from the city, and I am very glad and happy to come back. I am glad that I came back "right end to," because I have been in doubt and a good deal of uncertainty about what they call life.

I am not disposed to talk about death—to me it is a gruesome subject; I am willing to try to encourage the other fellow, but I cannot get much happiness out of it for myself.

I stand before you Latter-day Saint people, not knowing why I should be fearful, or doubtful, or uncertain. In April—this conference time—I have been in the First Council of the Seventy for forty-two years, and I have stood in this Tabernacle from time to time during those long years and have failed in attending but very few conferences.

You may think that what I am going to say is personal, but I am given to talking about personal things. Brother Claude Richards wrote a book in which he assembled together forty talks that I have made in this Tabernacle under the direction of the brethren of the Authorities. Of course, those talks were approved or they would not have been printed. I have been absent in California, and have had plenty of time to think. The brethren of the Authorities have been exceedingly lenient and kind to me, and when I get the blues—which I do occasionally, I become melancholy without much trouble—at such times I read this J. Golden book. If you could get as much faith and joy and hope and encouragement out of it as I did, it is worth \$2.50.

It is not because things are printed in it that I have said, that I make this statement, but I know just as well as I know the sun sets that there are in that book testimonies and things that I never could repeat. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit in talking to the people, God gave me the spirit of testimony. I have read those testimonies—there are forty of them, forty talks—and I challenge you to find one of them in which I did not get the spirit of testimony, the spirit of my office and calling as a witness for God. I ought to be happy and I am.

I am verging on my eighty-second year. I have the same living testimony today that I had when I began this work. I have the same testimony that I had when I stood in Virginia proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people just fifty years ago. I am telling you good people I have had a full life of experience, having a wife and six children, with all life's joys, struggles, hardships and sacrifices. I am telling you plainly and frankly that the greatest joy, the greatest peace, and the greatest happiness I have ever had in my life have come when speaking under the spirit of testimony. I have felt that thrill throughout my being. It is a joy and happiness that cannot be expressed.

I stand before you unafraid and just as humble as a child. I marvel, I wonder, I cannot understand why I have lived as long as I have. I am proud in representing the First Council of Seventy, in which Council I have been associated for forty-two years. I look back with joy and pride and thank the Lord from the bottom of my heart that I have been one so

favored as to associate not only with the brethren of the First Council, but also with the Council of the Twelve and the Presidency of the Church. We have now—outside of Brother Rulon S. Wells, who is about the same age as myself, though perhaps much stronger physically—more vigorous men in the First Council than for some years.

I hereby testify they are men well chosen; they are men I am proud to associate with; they are men who are worthy and capable; they are men who have the Gospel of Jesus Christ burning in their souls. All I desire, if I never speak again, is that they live up to the tradition of the Seventies. I am of the old school and declare that the revelations in Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants are just as clear, just as understandable, just as comprehensive as the noon-day sun as to the calling of the Seventy. There need be no contention regarding the matter; there need be no difference of opinion. It is fixed, it is settled, it is fastened, as to the calling of a Seventy. He is a special witness of the Lord, the bearer of the message, under the direction of the Twelve Apostles, and it is his duty and calling to go out into the world and preach the Gospel continuously.

I have in my pocket now, yellow with age, the teachings of Jesus Christ to his Apostles and to the Seventies, and I know of no revelation that changes or annuls Christ's teachings one whit. I do not criticize nor find fault with the methods by which we preach the Gospel, but I know just as well as I know I live and breathe that if you have the faith God will provide the way.

When we think we can preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ without sacrifice, without hardship, without persecution, then we have changed the whole plan. I used to tell our Elders in the South: "You let these Christian churches alone and if you do not you will bring on yourselves persecution. I am telling you Elders"—(and I told it to them in the woods where they would not forget it)—"if you will go out under the influence of the Holy Ghost and testify that God is the Father, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, you will get all the persecution you can stand."

I am a living witness that this is true, for the devil hates that testimony, and he tried to destroy my father and others of the brethren when they opened that great mission in England. Everything in his power was done. When Heber C. Kimball returned to the Prophet he was alarmed and wondered if he had done anything that was wrong. The Prophet told him: "No. You were so close to the Father that there was only a thin veil between you and God, and whenever the Elders of Israel are to accomplish a great work, the devil gets in his power."

I pray the Lord to bless you good people. I have been in California living among those people there; I attended two of their stake conferences, I partook of their spirit; they have the same spirit, the same love, the same kindness that we have here, and it repaid me for my trip to associate with those good people. I am telling you, in a burst of confidence that they do not want to come back, either; they like that country, and I do not blame them.

May the Lord bless you and the brethren of the Authorities, whom

I sustain as fully and completely as I know how. I pray for these blessings in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER WILFORD W. RICHARDS

President of the North Central States Mission

On the first day of November, 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation. That revelation came to be Section one of the Doctrine and Covenants. It stands as the Lord's preface to that great and wonderful book. I desire to read briefly from this section, beginning with verse two, as follows:

For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.

And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth.

This represents the challenge to the present dispensation. We carry the glad tidings to God's children in all the earth. I am grateful to be in that field of service which has to do with the carrying of the voice of warning to the people of the world. I am grateful to be associated with the calling of the priesthood, that gives me the responsibility as well as the blessings and inspiration associated with the life of a missionary.

I am happy to have followed, in the North Central States Mission, the work of President John G. Allred and President Arthur Welling. They were both able and courageous men, champions of truth. Elder Welling, my immediate predecessor, did a wonderful work in that mission, and has many friends. His testimony has been borne up and down those states and two Provinces of Canada, wherever opportunity was afforded. I am grateful for the spirit which he left there, for the companionship which he gave me, as I was introduced into that mission some nine months ago.

The people have not forgotten the blessing and service which came to them through the association of Elder Melvin J. Ballard, on his trip through the mission in June and July of last year. They are inquiring when again they shall have the blessing and companionship of another member of the General Authorities of the Church. They send to you, my brethren of the General Authorities of the Church, their love, their devotion and their spirit of loyalty. They are grateful for membership in this Church, and have attempted to show that gratitude in the past year in many ways, one of which is marked more particularly by the payment of tithes, to the extent of an increase of fifty-five per cent over the year previous. They are rallying to support the truths of this dispensation,