

## ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I am very grateful, my brethren and sisters, to be identified with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It doesn't seem very long since I bore my first testimony. It was at the time of my baptism, or when I was being confirmed. I had been reared in a Latter-day Saint home and had been taught to pray by a devoted mother. I was made to understand that we are children of our Heavenly Father. Then I was baptized, when eight years of age, and became a member of the Church. And by the way, I was baptized in old City Creek on the north side of this block.

## A CHILD'S FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING

At the fast meeting that was held after I had been confirmed a member of the Church a dear old auntie, who long since has gone home, asked me, "Don't you want to bear your testimony?" I had heard others bear their testimonies, but I had never thought of bearing mine. I arose to my feet and I was just as sure then that I belonged to the Church of the Lamb of God as I am today. I was only a child, and that brings to my attention the fact that the Lord has given to our people a commandment that we are to teach our children to pray and to walk uprightly before him. He has said that parents in Zion having children shall teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and faith in God, and see that they are baptized and have the hands of the servants of God laid upon their heads for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost when eight years of age. And if we as parents fail in this duty the sin will be upon our heads.

There are many people who have believed that it is not possible for children to understand at eight, but I stand here today as a witness that I had that understanding as far as it was possible for me as a child to know.

## THOSE WHO DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM

We are living in a time when the world needs faith. Men and women throughout the length and breadth of this earth lack faith and they certainly lack understanding. The Lord in his mercy has given that to us and in the very first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, referred to here today, he warns us of the things that are to happen. He tells us of the difficulties that will arise, and later places upon the membership of this Church the obligation to divide with our Father's children the assurance of the blessings of eternal life.

There are many great church organizations in the world, many devout men and women living according to the will of our Heavenly Father as they understand it. Reference was made by the preceding speaker to the faithful pastor of a church who believed that the Lord would speak to the world and would raise up His Church.

All men who will live up to the light that the Lord has offered to them and seek him in earnest prayer will have their hearts touched, their minds will be influenced, and opportunity will be offered to them to know that God has spoken again.

#### THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

When the Savior was upon the earth he went to and fro among the people, not with a loud voice, making a great noise, but in humility he went about blessing the children of men. His disciples too visited among the people, teaching and blessing them. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of blessing, not a gospel of boasting, not a gospel of fault-finding and criticism, but a gospel of industry, purity, obedience, peace, love, charity, kindness, faith and patience. Therefore, as members of his great Church we ought to be exemplars in this regard to all the world.

#### TEACHING IN THE HOME

I regret that there are among us some men and women who neglect their opportunities to live and teach the Gospel in their homes, and the result is that their children grow up without an assurance of the divine mission of Jesus Christ. They fail to observe the commandment that God gave to teach our children these things that are necessary. Fathers and mothers, teach your children as directed. What a joy it ought to be to you to teach your little children how to pray, to draw them near to our Heavenly Father, to let them feel the influence of his presence, to know that he can hear and answer prayer. What a joy it ought to be to the Latter-day Saints to gather around their own firesides and under the influence of family prayer call down the blessings of the Lord.

#### THE TRUTH MADE MANIFEST

The trouble with mankind today is that they are depending upon the wisdom of men. They are seeking the influence and association and direction of men who are teaching their own philosophies, and many of these philosophies are vain. The Lord offers to all of us opportunity to know his will, to know what our duty is in order that we may obtain eternal life. This is not a militant church to which we belong. This is a church that holds out peace to the world. It is not our duty to go into the world and find fault with others, neither to criticize men because they do not understand. But it is our privilege, in kindness and love, to go among them and divide with them the truth that the Lord has revealed in this latter day.

How humble we ought to feel, not boastful; how grateful we ought to feel, not selfish, when we realize that from among the millions of God's children we have been gathered, and the truth has been made manifest unto us and we are made to understand the purpose of life, to realize where we came from, why we are here, and the opportunities that God has prepared for us to go hence and enjoy eternal life in the celestial kingdom. Ought that not to cause us to feel humble? And surely the

Spirit of God will be in our souls if in humility we desire to divide with our fellows the blessings of life.

#### GREATER THAN SECULAR KNOWLEDGE

A plea has been made by Brother Richards of the Southern States Mission that we send our sons and daughters into the mission field. We spend a very great deal of money giving them the opportunity for education in the secular institutions of the world. We feel it is a great privilege to have our boys and our girls graduate and receive a degree in the universities of the world, and it is. But I say to you that there is no university that I know of in the world that will give to the human family the knowledge that God lives, that will plant in the lives of the children of men an assurance of eternal life, unless it be the one that belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is not because good men and good women do not desire to know. They do not and can not teach the Gospel because they have not received it. But we have received it, and with that reception there comes to us a tremendous responsibility.

#### BLESSINGS THROUGH MISSIONARY SERVICE

It has been a joy to me to see men and women economize and plan in order that their children may go into the world. Within the last few weeks a young man from an outlying settlement left to go into the mission field, and his two sisters who are employed here in Salt Lake City are sending him part of their small salaries that he may enjoy the blessing of a mission. He is the first of a large family of children to go into the mission field to disseminate the truth, and yet he is a descendant of those who received the Gospel from the early Elders of this Church. I know the joy that will come into the hearts of those two fine women who have faith to give their means to their brother in order that he may serve the Lord in the field. They will receive the blessing that comes from teaching the Gospel, as far as it is possible to receive it without personal service.

As I go to and fro in the mission field I see the development of these fine young men and women who are unselfishly serving, and realize that not only do they learn the language of the countries in which they labor, but they know that they have a gift from the Lord to disseminate a truth that the people may not obtain in any other way.

#### ALL MUST HEAR THE GOSPEL

We are living in the latter days, in the time when the Lord said that the world would be afflicted by pestilence and earthquakes, that the sea should heave itself beyond its bounds, that there should be thunderings and lightnings, and wars and rumors of wars. Surely the scriptures are being fulfilled, but before the earth shall be cleansed and purified and prepared for the second coming of our Lord, his Gospel must be proclaimed to all the nations of the earth. His sons and daughters must

carry the message of life and salvation that means everything to those who are in darkness.

Do we realize that every man is in the image of God and is a son of God, and every woman his daughter? No matter where they may be, they are his children, and he loves them and desires their salvation. Surely as members of this Church we cannot sit idly by. We cannot receive the beneficent favor of our Heavenly Father that is bestowed upon us, the knowledge of eternal life, and selfishly retain it, thinking that we may be blessed thereby. It is not what we receive that enriches our lives, it is what we give. It is not the things that come to us without effort; it is that which results from work that rejoices our souls.

#### THE PURPOSE OF THIS ASSEMBLAGE

We are met in this marvelous tabernacle under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, not as an ordinary convention; we are not assembled here to be taught by men the things that they have obtained in the schools of the world, but we are here to wait upon our Father in heaven, your Father and mine, the Father of our spirits, the Author of our being, the one who gives to us everything that we enjoy; and we are here to wait upon him knowing that he has promised us that if even two or three shall meet in his name he will be there, and that to bless them.

Surely we have been blessed this day. The Spirit of God has been poured out upon us. My heart has been warmed and filled as I have looked out into this great audience to see men and women who have come from the various parts of this great nation and some from other nations.

I see now a group of our brothers and sisters from the far-off Hawaiian Islands who have come that long distance. Why? In order that they may worship God at the headquarters of the Church, that they may partake of the inspiration of the Lord as it flows through his servants who may be called to teach. I feel from the bottom of my heart to say, God bless you, my brethren and sisters, for making this long pilgrimage; bless you all who have forsaken your homes temporarily and have come up to worship. You have not come for sight-seeing, you have not come to partake of the influences that are found in the theatres and amusement halls of the world, but you have come up to worship.

What a priceless privilege to worship our Father in heaven in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son! Ought we not to be grateful? It seems to me that as I look into your eager, upturned faces and realize what the Lord has done for you and for me, there are no words of mine that can adequately express the feelings of our hearts as we are filled by that power that comes from him.

I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that this is the work of our Heavenly Father, established by his beloved Son. While I realize that in all great church organizations and in all schools of learning truth is taught, yet I do know that all the truth that is possessed by all of them that is necessary in preparation for eternal life

in the celestial kingdom is a part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and has been bestowed upon us, if we have the desire to receive it.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF SACRED MUSIC

We have listened to sweet voices that have entertained and entranced us. I think it is delightful to hear as we have a chorus of "Singing Mothers." And it is pleasing also to have a chorus of singing fathers in the priesthood quorums. I am grateful for a Church that teaches the joy and encourages the sweet influences that come from music. So important are the hymns of the Church that our Heavenly Father appointed the Prophet's wife Emma to select hymns that were appropriate for sacred services. We do have excellent hymns in this Church. Even our Primary children, beginning in their tender years, are taught not only to sing the songs of the world, but they are taught to sing the praises of our Heavenly Father and to give thanksgiving in the music that is prepared. What a comforting, uplifting influence there is in music.

#### AN INCIDENT IN THE SOUTHERN STATES

Brother LeGrand Richards has spoken for the Southern States Mission. Many years ago, two humble Elders laboring in that mission were walking through the woods and finally came out into a clearing where nestled a humble cottage, the home of friends. Overlooking this clearing was a hill covered by large trees. It had been a warm day. When the Elders arrived, instead of sitting in the house they took their chairs out on the shady porch to visit with the family. They didn't know that they were being watched or that danger threatened. They were there as servants of the Lord. They had come through a section of the country that was unfriendly and having found a home where the family was friendly they were grateful to the Lord for it.

They were asked to sing and they selected one of our hymns, "Do What is Right." You know the hymn. And as they sang it, even as they started to sing it, there arrived on the brow of the hill above them a mob of twenty horsemen. They had come there with the determination to drive those missionaries out. As they came to the top of the hill they heard those missionaries singing. The leader of the mob got off his horse. He looked down among those trees and saw the roof of the house. He could not see the Elders. They continued to sing. One by one the men got off their horses. Gradually they removed their hats, and when the last note had died away and the Elders had finished their singing the men mounted their horses and rode away, and the leader said to his companions, "Men who sing like that are not the kind of men we have been told they are."

#### OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DISSEMINATE THE TRUTH

My brethren and sisters, this is God's work, established for the salvation and exaltation not of a few but for all men and all women who will accept it, preparing us for a place in the celestial kingdom, offering op-

portunity for all our Father's sons and daughters eventually to dwell with him.

Now, knowing that and realizing the responsibility of disseminating that truth among the children of men, how anxious you ought to be, how anxious I ought to be that my own household be in order, that the members of that household be prepared, if they are called upon, to go to the uttermost corners of the earth and disseminate this truth, to the end that men and women may know of a surety that God lives and that we are all his children.

Think of the difference between hope and knowledge; think of the difference between desire to know and positive assurance. Our Heavenly Father has promised us that if we will receive the ordinances of his Holy House, if we will partake of the influences that come as a result of obedience to his Gospel, we may know, as we know that we live, that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that his work is upon the earth and that we are preparing ourselves here for eternal happiness; or if we fail to take advantage of our opportunities, for eternal regret.

#### IN OUR OWN COMMUNITIES

Brethren and sisters, you who live in the organized stakes of Zion, when you go home from this conference take with you the spirit that you find here. If there be those who are careless, renew your efforts and encourage them to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Inconvenience yourselves, if necessary, to bring those who are careless and indifferent into close contact with the worship of the Lord as carried out in our chapels and temples. Let us do this earnestly.

The time is short. Not very many years remain for some of us in mortality. If we are to do the work of the Lord we must be about our Father's business. There isn't a man here, not a woman here but is called to labor, to do good in the world and to bless the communities in which we live. Oh, how happy we will be if we avail ourselves of our opportunities and serve our Heavenly Father by serving mankind.

#### GRATEFUL FOR PRIVILEGES

God bless you, my brethren and sisters. I thank you for the comfort and satisfaction that you have given to me. I am grateful for the privilege I have of mingling with you in your homes and in the houses of worship throughout the land.

President Grant, I am grateful to you and to my brethren here for the privilege that I have of associating with you, each and every one, for the encouragement and the help that you give to me. God bless you brethren from the mission fields. You have a marvelous work to perform, and our Heavenly Father will magnify you and bless you in proportion to your faithfulness.

I pray that the Lord will bless us all, that we may be worthy of our high calling and the opportunities that he has offered to us as fathers and mothers, as parents and children. Let us be what God would have



us be and Zion will arise and shine and our Heavenly Father will multiply our opportunities and blessings.

Not very long from now the summons will reach every one of us. Our earth life will be complete and we will stand on the other side of the Great Divide. Oh, how I pray that when that time comes we shall face our record unashamed and unafraid because we have magnified our callings and been worthy of our membership in this Church.

That the Lord may add his blessing, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### ELDER RUFUS K. HARDY

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

My beloved brethren and sisters, I have had the feeling today, somewhat, that I had many years ago; in fact, when I was a child I stood here in this building; then the experience of childish humility which comes from having made mistakes, overwhelmed me.

Brother Evan Stephens had four boys who he thought could sing, and so he made a quartet. Those four boys were Heber Aldous, Horace Ensign, Zeb Jacobs and myself. He had told the other three that they should repeat the chorus, but he didn't tell me. So when the chorus was sung once I turned around and took my seat, and the other three were left standing. I felt so humiliated that that finished my aspirations in the line of vocal music.

I am grateful and indeed happy for the privilege of being here and partaking of the spirit of this conference and the splendid influence which is here with us. I know that some of you have traveled many miles and made sacrifice to reach this place, and there keeps coming into my mind the thought of the old Jewish pilgrims who anciently went to their synagogues, a people who were beset with privations, misfortune, torment, all manner of humiliation, and as they went to their temples, they tried to divest themselves of those thoughts which tended to take their minds from the worship which they intended to perform. It is claimed that on the soles of their sandals, the soles of their shoes, these old Jews wrote the name of their enemy and in walking to their synagogue left the name and also the memory of that which had perplexed them, in the dust, and so sat and worshiped with a clean heart and a free, untrammelled mind.

We may do the same here. We may leave behind us those little besetting, annoying things that would take our minds from the important issues of this blessed conference and this great gathering, that we may do that which we have set out to do, worship God and his Son Jesus Christ; that we may worship that Christ who came from glory, came from the realms above, from the celestial courts, to be born here on earth in a manger amid humble,