

4 are independent, 3 are spending all they have, 36 have died, 54 are dependent at the age of 65.

I believe, my brethren and sisters, that the greatest insurance that can come to man or woman in this earth is that assurance which God gives, the promise that to those who are faithful and keep his commandments shall come eternal life and happiness.

God help us to understand his purposes. May we look back upon the work of our ancestors and remember that the actuating influence was faith. May we recall the blessings that came to them, and which have been passed on to us. Let us develop in our own soul a spirit of pride, that it may not be said of us that we must turn to charity, forgetting God and his promises. May we keep the commandments of God and magnify his work and humble ourselves before the Lord. I pray, my brethren and sisters, that he will look upon us in mercy, help us to understand his purposes fully and to labor in faith and diligence to accomplish them, that we may enjoy the blessings he has promised, I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"O Divine Redeemer," was sung by the Manti Choir, Clara Johnson, soloist.

### ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

#### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My brethren and sisters, I pray that the influence which has made this conference beautifully spiritual may guide me while I stand before you. I always feel that it is a great privilege to bear testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and I feel so today, although I confess that to stand before this great audience is to be filled with human fear.

#### THE THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO GOD

I testify to you, my brethren and sisters, that I know that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, our Redeemer, and that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has been restored in these days, for our good and salvation, through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I rejoice in this knowledge and in this testimony. Into this knowledge I can tie all the affairs of my life. It gives life and joy to all the things that pertain to my life.

I know that it is good to deal with the things of God. In this perplexing and perplexed world, in this world of depression of which we have heard much during this conference, there is no place in which we can find such comfort and peace, joy and forgetfulness, as in the things that pertain to God and his dealings with his children. To read the scriptures when one is depressed, to attend meetings, to go to the temple, is to bring peace and comfort into one's heart. I believe, my brethren and sisters, that when we so do, we are able to see more clearly the solutions of the affairs of life, and understand better how to meet the issues of this or any other day that may come into our lives.

I know that God is guiding this Church. His will is overshadowing his Church. There is no chance in the progress of this great institution. As this Church goes about doing its duty, no mistakes are made that do not vanish in the great forward movement occasioned by the Spirit of God.

#### NOTABLE EVENTS IN CHURCH HISTORY

I have been thinking a great deal lately about the notable events that occurred one hundred years ago. I have had occasion to read the splendid issue of the Improvement Era dedicated to the memory of the organization of the first Council of the Twelve and the first Council of the Seventy in this dispensation. I trust that every Latter-day Saint home will secure a copy of this very notable publication of the Church, and secure them before the edition is exhausted. The Deseret News, likewise, has featured these events for the last several weeks. I have enjoyed reflecting upon the matters that these publications have set forth before us.

May I say, in passing, that I hope all Latter-day Saints have access to our own great newspaper, the Deseret News. I read it daily, and I am very glad—and it is indeed the truth as I understand it,—to say to you that no finer newspaper reaches my table, nor do I find a finer one as I travel about throughout the world. If we want our papers and magazines to be worthy of this great Church, we must sustain them loyally, not only with our good will but with our purses as well.

#### A MOST REMARKABLE REVELATION

One hundred years ago this spring great things happened in this Church; the greatest as an evidence of God's guiding hand over his Church, occurred on March 28th, 1835, just a few days more than one hundred years ago. On that day the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints received a revelation which is one of the most remarkable documents in the possession of man. It stands absolutely unique; there is none like it. There is no time here to discuss the details of this revelation; but it sets forth, in plainness and simplicity, the organization of the quorums of the priesthood; the mutual relations of the quorums to one another; the judicial system of the Church is foreshadowed and outlined; and there is a wonderful picture of the early history of the priesthood. I doubt whether any other such document, of the same small extent, the same few number of words, lies at the foundation of any other great human institution.

This revelation, now known as Section 107, together with two or three other revelations, forms, as it were, the constitution of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, upon which we are building today, and upon which we will build until the Lord comes. It is so comprehensive in its brevity, so magnificent in its simplicity, that we have found no occasion, up to the present, to wish that it might have been more complete.

## BUILDING THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The thing that impresses me about this revelation is the manner of its coming. When the Prophet Joseph Smith was but a lad, he had the great privilege of seeing and conversing with the Father and the Son. Later, Moroni came to visit him. This visit was followed by a number of revelations; the plates were obtained; the Book of Mormon was translated. Then, suddenly as it seems to us, reading the history of the Church, on April 6th, 1830, all that which the Prophet had obtained was assembled, organized, crystallized in the revelation known as Section twenty in the book of Doctrine and Covenants; and the Church of Jesus Christ was organized and reestablished upon the earth.

After the organization of the Church a series of great revelations came to the Prophet, until the great day of which I am speaking, March 28th, 1835. As I read human history I know of no other period of five years, save the years of the Savior's ministry, that is so rich in the presentation of new, eternal truth, as these first five years in the history of the restored Church of Christ. Elders were provided for in 1830. High priests were ordained in 1831. A year or two later the first presidency was organized. In the spring of 1835 apostles and seventies were called. Then all at once, as it were, God summed up all that he had given the Prophet and the people, and gave a simple revelation, Section 107 in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, to serve as another foundation stone for the building of the Church of Christ.

That is God's way; that is the natural way. We men and women, when we build nations often attempt to write their constitutions in full at the beginning. The natural way is God's way, to receive here a little and there a little, until the time of ripening comes and completion is attained.

## BUILDING FOR ETERNAL LIFE

I wonder, my brethren and sisters, if we do not need that lesson today. We worry a great deal about the days that come and go, about the depression, (and we have need to worry about it) and about many other things that give us concern. Yet I feel, frequently, that if we would go about doing our duties properly and fully, that somehow out of the small as well as the great experiences of our lives would crystallize the great thing for us, the thing that we most need. I cannot understand eternal life any other way. I do my duty, little by little, day by day, year by year, and then the Lord takes the deeds of my life, and as we use bricks in the building of a house, he builds for me eternal life. We may have forgotten that, at times, in our eagerness to accomplish.

## THE MANNER OF ITS COMING

While I was thinking about this revelation, I became interested in the manner of its coming. I find in the History of the Church, that the first Twelve who had been selected in February scarcely knew what to do. It was a new calling to them. Finally they assembled and decided

that they would leave their homes and set about to preach the Gospel, in accordance with instructions given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. On March 28th, 1835, as they were about to leave on their missions, they sent to the Prophet Joseph Smith a letter, the major part of which reads as follows (It is signed by the Council of the Twelve, by their clerks, Orson Hyde and William E. McLellan) :

We feel to ask of him whom we have acknowledged to be our Prophet and Seer, that he inquire of God for us, and obtain a revelation, (if consistent) that we may look upon it when we are separated, that our hearts may be comforted. Our worthiness has not inspired us to make this request, but our unworthiness. We have unitedly asked God our Heavenly Father to grant unto us, through his Seer, a revelation of his mind and will concerning our duty the coming season, even a great revelation, that will enlarge our hearts, comfort us in adversity, and brighten our hopes amidst the powers of darkness.

#### TWO IMPORTANT LESSONS

I read in this request two great lessons : First, if we want something for this Church and Kingdom, or if we want something for our individual lives, we must have a great, earnest, overpowering desire for that thing. We must reach out for it, with full faith in our Heavenly Father that the gift may be given us. Then it would seem as if the Lord himself cannot resist our petition. If our desire is strong enough, if our whole will is tempered and attuned to that which we desire, if our lives make us worthy of the desired gift, the Lord, by his own words, is bound to give us that which we desire, in his own time and in his own manner. These twelve men, chosen witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ, prayed upon their knees that a revelation might be given to comfort them. They put themselves into this desire with all their strength and they obtained answer in this great revelation, on the very same day, from the mouth of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

There is yet another lesson, which I think we need. In their request the brethren of the first Council of the Twelve said, "We feel to ask of him whom we have acknowledged to be our Prophet and Seer : " I wonder also if all of us do acknowledge our Prophet and Seer as these men acknowledged him. They declared for the generations to come that he was their prophet and seer, that he had the power to guide them and the Church. They placed themselves, as it were, at his disposal, because of the inspiration that was his as the President of the Church. Perhaps we fail to receive some revelations in our day which are waiting for us because we do not recognize our prophet and seer with the same deep faith with which these first apostles approached the prophet of their day as they pleaded with him and with the Lord for a great revelation to guide and comfort them.

#### MISSIONARY WORK ESTABLISHED

Yet another thought lingers in my mind. It was in this notable revelation that the missionary work of the Church was formally organized for the first time in this dispensation. Missionary work had been done by this Church from the very beginning of its existence ; and perhaps

even before the Church was organized. But, when Section 107 was given, missionary work was formally established; the appointment and definition of the twelve apostles were clearly made; the labors and functions of the Seventies were equally clearly set out; and missionary work went forward, from that time on, as never before.

#### VALUE OF MISSIONARY WORK

The demand that the Church organize for missionary work involves the indispensable principle of sacrifice, which already has been touched upon here in this conference. There is no progress, no attainment worth while, no effort acceptable to our Heavenly Father, except upon the principle of the giving of one's self, in cooperation with the Lord, for the great earth purposes of the Almighty. What great results have come out of missionary work! There is probably not a person in a thousand in this great audience who cannot trace his pedigree in the Church back to the conversion of some ancestor, or of himself, by a missionary in the field. We are all products of our missionary work.

The value of missionary work is not alone in the spread of the knowledge of the Gospel, and in the converts made. The effects upon those engaged in it are equally striking. The Council of the Twelve, during the last twelve months, have been engaged in a survey of the present condition of all living, returned missionaries in the Church. You stake presidents and bishops will remember the blanks sent out to you. This work is not quite complete yet. When finished it will undoubtedly be published for your information. I have selected from the record some few figures that seem eloquent of what missionary work does for the individual.

#### THE EFFECT UPON THE MISSIONARY

We have now in the office the records of 15,742 returned living missionaries, men and women. Of these, the stake presidents and bishops certify that 96 per cent exert a good influence among their fellows: 84 per cent are tithe-payers; 86 per cent keep the Word of Wisdom: 73 per cent—and remember that many of these returned missionaries are elderly people, unable to hold office—are holding office in the Church today. What is almost the most remarkable, in this day of depression, 92 per cent of all the living returned missionaries, are employed. The 8 per cent who are not employed, include the housewives and the older people who are unable to work. My estimate is that not more than 4 per cent of our returned missionaries are unemployed.

I think these figures speak for themselves as to the good effects of missionary labor upon the missionary himself. True, the missionaries are a selected group. They are chosen because they are worthy; but even so, these figures are really eloquent in showing that missionary sacrifice and service strengthen the man and fit him better for work with the Church and for work among his fellow men. Indeed, would a man be successful in life, he would find missionary service of great help to him.

I am grateful to the Lord for the great revelation of March 28th, 1835. May we all learn to know it, learn to understand it, live in accord-

ance with it, and in all things be worthy of the great things that the Lord has given us, I pray, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

### ELDER JOHN H. TAYLOR

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I humbly pray, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord will direct me in the things that I have to say to you this afternoon.

I am very fortunate in having the association and the friendship of the young men and women of the Church who have accepted a call to go out and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I say I am fortunate, because they represent a very splendid type of young people. They have good health. They are well educated for their age. They have good morals. They have an honest desire in their hearts to go out and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in plainness and simplicity, and give of their time and their service in the interest of this great work.

It is true that there are some exceptions, and those exceptions ought to be as few as possible, because of the missionary himself, because of the Church, because of investigators and those who are friendly toward us.

The missionary needs good health, because this type of life is a strenuous life, and those who are engaged in it ought to go out in as good physical condition as it is possible. They owe it to their mission, they owe it to their companion, they owe it to those who are furnishing the means, to be so equipped physically that they will be able to do the work assigned to them.

As I say, the work is strenuous, and the mission field is not a place for invalids or those who have chronic ailments. There is a place for such people at home, where they may serve with greater satisfaction to themselves and more helpfulness to the Church. It is also our duty to keep our missionaries in good health when they are in the mission field, and to return them home, as far as it is possible, in good health and strength.

It is true that our Heavenly Father blesses us and guides us and protects us, but it always seems to me that our Heavenly Father can be relied upon to protect and help us more if we do our part in protecting ourselves. When missionaries are careless and do not give proper care to their bodies, I am sure that they cannot be protected in the same way or to the degree that missionaries can who are careful and live according to the commandments of the Lord.

Their education, I say, is good. It is on the average. They are young people, and as far as their youth will permit they have gone through the schools. We sometimes find criticism about our young people and the education that they have, but as long as we send young people of eighteen, nineteen or twenty years of age we cannot expect them to go out with college degrees. If we want the other type—and I think we do—we will have to send missionaries who are older to add to the splendid type of young people whom we now have.

They have good morals, an essential thing in preaching the Gospel