

ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON

President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, we have had a wonderful Conference thus far. We are a greatly blessed people, but we find ourselves in a world that is sometimes designated as "the lone and dreary world," and as we pass along we encounter many dangerous pitfalls, but the Lord in heaven has provided a guide to take us safely through.

FOUR IMPORTANT BOOKS

Let me draw your attention to the fact that we have four great and important books, comprising the standard works of the Church—namely, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. These four precious volumes which contain the word of God to the children of men constitute the best library in all the world. I say this confidently without mental reservation.

GIFT OF HOLY GHOST NECESSARY

In connection with these important books that mean so much and are of such inestimable value to the Latter-day Saints, we have the gift of the Holy Ghost. This is highly essential because it is well understood that the prophets of old wrote and spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And in order to understand and comprehend their writings we must study those writings with the same spirit by which they were written. So that I think I can safely say that this gift which is given without exception to every member of the Church, at the time of his or her baptism, enables Latter-day Saints, and even young children, in great measure, to understand the glorious doctrines of the Gospel; whereas without this gift the most learned and cultured people on earth could not comprehend the words of these sacred books.

A SURE GUIDE

In addition to all this, as constituting a sure guide, we have the living oracles of the Church. The prophets in the meridian of time have spoken to us, and now the prophets of the latter days speak; and it should not be forgotten that we have also had one hundred years of most important and valuable experience behind us. We have been well looked after. The Lord has ever been mindful of his people. He is near at hand. He hears their prayers and answers the righteous desires of their hearts.

There are three great things connected with the guidance alluded to. First, during the past one hundred years a great and marvelous work has been accomplished by the Latter-day Saints; secondly, at the present time a further great and marvelous work is being accomplished; and, thirdly, there is room for great improvement.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

We read in the Book of Mormon the words of the prophet Lehi

(and, mark you, he was a great prophet),—he said: “Adam fell that men might be, and men are, that they might have joy.” In that line of but a few words is disclosed the purpose of life: The very purpose of life is then that men might have *joy*.

Many people may be happy. Many people may be joyous. But no person, or people, can have a fulness of joy except under certain stated conditions, and those conditions are set forth in one of the great revelations given to Joseph Smith, the prophet. The words are these:

Man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy. (D. and C. 93:33.)

THREE DIFFERENT ESTATES

We are told in the Pearl of Great Price that man's experience has come to him through certain estates. There is the first estate and the second estate and the third estate. In the first, pre-existent, estate man's experience was spiritual in its character. We were spirits there and we were happy. We belonged to a great family of spirits. It was a heavenly place and we were happy but we could not altogether appreciate that happiness because we had had no experience for comparison. We must have lived a great while. We must have learned much in that pre-existent state but something further was essential; something needed to be added to us that was lacking, and that is shown to be the case by certain scriptures that are found in the Holy Bible wherein it is said, “God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul.”

Previously he was not a living soul, he was a living spirit. You are living souls; I am a living soul. Satan is not a living soul, neither are those wicked spirits who went with him, who rebelled in heaven and were cast out and came down to earth. Their punishment, according to the words of Joseph Smith, the prophet, is that they should not be given bodies.

And so this gives us an idea of how very precious and desirable is the body. It is called the tabernacle of the spirit. It is called a living temple of God, and how wonderful that is, and it is only when we have attained to that condition that we can rise in the resurrection, after taking up these bodies, to exaltation and glory in that future third estate; so that we have in this matter of three estates a perfect brief citation of the purpose and meaning of life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BODY

Bernard McFadden, the publisher of the Physical Culture Journal, pays a glowing tribute to the importance of the body. It is so much in line with the teaching of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that it seems to me possibly you would be interested in hearing what he says about the body.

The title of this editorial is “Making our Body Glorious.”

Glorify God in your body is a Biblical command. It is a command also dictated by common sense. Your body is the house in which you must live all through life. You cannot move out of it until you make your last trip to the cemetery.

To exalt and beautify the body exemplifies the highest degree of culture and intelligence. Your body should be treated with reverence. It should be cared for daily, and given every consideration. You should assume the responsibility as a sacred trust. Therefore, the acquirement of buoyant, vital health is a duty no one should neglect.

Many of the tragedies that are so interestingly present in the vivid, life-like stories, were made possible because the body was treated with indifference.

When you possess a hardy, vigorous body, your physical instincts give poise and add force to your character. Your very soul is more keenly alive. And you then have a foundation for spiritual power, that should be invaluable in the attainment of life's great riches of mind and soul.

Nearly all criminals are physically as well as mentally defective. They have sinned against the body, and they had to pay the associated penalties.

Man was made in the image of God, so the Good Book tells us. If you expect love and romance to come into your life, you should try and make your body godlike in its proportions. It is only then that masculinity and femininity possess the fascinating lure that leads to a sacred love. The glamor of romance, after all, serves a very practical purpose. It is made to perpetuate the home and guarantee the continuance of the race. Therefore, do not decry the body—your flesh and blood home. Give it careful consideration every day of your life. Make it strong, fine and splendid throughout its every part.

In I Corinthians 3:16-17 we read: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" * * * "If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Regardless of your religious views, you cannot get away from the truth of this divine philosophy.

Our bodily house can be built with such fine material that it will stand the stress and storm of the most severe nature.

Even the most devastating sorrows that seem to sear the soul to the very limit can be lived down and the sunlight of life can still add zest and glory to your daily life if you properly assume the sacred trust of building and maintaining that hardy strength which is our natural heritage.

THE SPIRITUAL AND THE TEMPORAL

I have no doubt, my brethren and sisters, that we all concur in what is said in this splendid editorial because it is in harmony with the teachings of the Gospel. The spirit is precious, the body is precious, and when joined together they constitute the soul of man. The spiritual body is greater than the temporal body, but even so we see how very important is the body and how careful we should be to refrain from taking into the body anything that would be hurtful to it or would have a tendency to defile it.

In this Conference we have heard of the spiritual and we have heard of the temporal. I have never been able myself to draw the exact line between the temporal and the spiritual. The line, if such there be, is very fine and almost indistinguishable.

THE TRUE CHURCH

I solemnly testify, my brethren and sisters, before sitting down, that

I do know absolutely that this is the true Church of the Redeemer of the world whose precious blood was shed that we might live and be redeemed and saved in the kingdom of God. I know also that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, faithful and true, and a wonderful man—wonderful indeed, and that his brother Hyrum, the Patriarch, was much like him.

I rejoice in this testimony and pray that it may ever be with me, and I invoke God's blessings upon you, brethren and sisters, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER WILFORD W. RICHARDS

President of the North Central States Mission

My brethren and sisters, I rejoice in the clarity and the strength with which the principles of the Gospel have been taught to us in this Conference. It is indeed good to be here.

We, in the North Central States Mission, believe that the present time is a very choice period in which to do missionary work. We are constantly being asked such vital questions as: What is behind all these things that are happening on Temple Block in Salt Lake City? What is it that stimulates and maintains your great missionary system? Why do you build these temples? How is your Security work organized and conducted? The answers to these questions carry much that is fundamental to our doctrine, our activity and our lives. People have always been interested in results. We as missionaries are delighted to point to some of these things as evidence of our activity and ability to meet the problems of the day.

It would seem that the theme of this conference may easily be summarized in that passage from the 87th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold it cometh quickly, saith the Lord.

Our inspired leaders have in these sessions clearly marked the path, and not only indicated the holy places, but have indicated the safety associated with them. It is a sacred privilege to be permitted to stand therein.

Our missionaries stand in holy places. As evidence of this, I suggest a recent experience in our Mission. It appeared necessary to leave one of our cities temporarily without missionaries, due to the release of one of our number. This plan brought from a non-member friend a fervent appeal that missionaries be returned to them. She spoke for her friends and neighbors and called our attention to the fact that they were being taught the sacred principles of the Gospel and needed sorely the help and leadership of the missionaries.

In due time, I personally accompanied an elder as he returned to this city. Across the aisle in the train was a young man in the custody of a sheriff. The officer was returning his companion to face serious charges of infraction of the law. I witnessed the uneasiness of the young man.