

My brethren and sisters, I believe we feel the responsibility of the message which we are endeavoring to carry to the world. I appreciate those of your sons and daughters who are in my care for a time. I praise them for their sincerity, for their energy, for their obedience, and I bring this message to you, that they are doing well and that we are making progress.

I pray that we may be able to uphold the high standard of those valiant men who have gone before us, who never compromised, and who knew no surrender or defeat. This I do, in Jesus' name, Amen.

## ELDER LeGRAND RICHARDS

### *Presiding Bishop of the Church*

I feel very humble, my brethren and sisters, in standing before you today. I am grateful for my membership in this Church; I am grateful for the opportunities of service which I have enjoyed. I am grateful for a testimony, and that there never comes into my mind the shadow of a doubt as to the divinity of this work, and that the Spirit of God is directing its destiny.

#### A MARVELOUS WORK

When this work was first instituted the Lord had in mind the achievement of great things. The prophets had seen and foretold them many, many years before, and when the Prophet Joseph was called in his youth, the Lord made a great assignment unto him, and he was told: "Now, behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men." On the first visitation of the Angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph he quoted many passages of scripture, among others the eleventh chapter of Isaiah where Isaiah said: "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." And Joseph was told that this day was at hand.

Two years after the Church was organized in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph, the Lord said:

For Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.

#### THE POWER OF GOD MANIFEST

The Lord, as I have said, had a great work to accomplish, and he proceeded to set up an organization to accomplish that work, and it has been my experience and my observation, because I have been privileged to work in all the organizations of the Church, in the mission field, and in the wards and stakes of Zion, that those who are on the inside and know

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what is actually being accomplished know that the power of God is in the organization and direction of this Church.

This morning we voted to sustain the Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve and the acting Presiding Patriarch as prophets, seers and revelators, and I want to bear testimony to you today that they are that, so far as my faith is concerned. The evidence of divinity in this work is in the accomplishments of the Church, that which is being done by the organizations the Lord has set in the Church to bring about the things which he had in mind, and when we analyze this inspired organization it would not be consistent to attribute to mortal man that which has been brought forth for the achievement of these things.

When we think of the general organization—the General Authorities, the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Seventies, the Presiding Bishopric—when we think of all the auxiliary boards, and follow the same organization through in the stakes with the stake presidencies and high councils, a similar organization, and then into the wards, with the bishoprics and their helps in government, the auxiliary organizations, and then when we think of the work that is being accomplished by these organizations, we must admit that the power of God is in it. It is not an uncommon thing for people who come into our midst to tell us that our Sunday Schools are superior, that our Relief Society excels other such organizations. It is not an uncommon thing for people to comment on the work of our Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations and recognize in their achievements, the leadership of youth, the like of which cannot be found elsewhere in the world.

#### A CHURCH FOR THE YOUTH

A short time before I left Los Angeles a prominent minister of that city, in delivering a radio address, said: "What we need today is a church for the youth of the land. We have been preaching to the old folks and letting the children go to the devil. That is why our churches are empty today" (and, incidentally, there are some twenty thousand empty churches in the United States today.)

I could not help but thank God that we have a church that has a program for the youth of the land. We entertained in our beautiful tabernacle in Los Angeles, the Deseret Club from the U. C. L. A., and Mr. Evans, the man who was in charge of all the religious clubs on the campus was there, and while some several hundred couples were engaged in the dance he turned to me and said: "Mr. Richards, I wish the other churches of Los Angeles could see what I can see here tonight."

Then following these auxiliary organizations we have the great organization of the Priesthood quorums, and I shall not take time to name them, but from the time a boy is twelve years of age right through until men are laid away in the grave they share with God divine authority, the right to officiate in his name, the right to speak for him, the right to direct as officers in the Church.

I was greatly impressed by a statement made by one of my boys when he was twelve years of age. He came to me one day and said: "Daddy, I have more authority than the President of the United States, haven't I?"

I said: "You surely have. The President of the United States receives his authority from the people, and when his term of office ends his authority is gone, but the authority you have is from God, and if you live properly you will enjoy it forever and ever."

#### OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

What a glorious thing when one understands the great organization of this Church, to know that instead of a community of a thousand people in which one man is selected to do all of God's work, every boy and every man who is willing to bear responsibility is given the opportunity if he will only live for it.

I have come to believe that only those who bear the burdens of the Church, those who labor in the Church, know how to appreciate it, and know of its worth and its value.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH GOSPEL'S RESTORATION

Then we have other great achievements that have come to us from the restoration of the Gospel—the Book of Mormon, to which Brother Evans has referred; the Word of Wisdom; the law of tithing; the law of Fast offerings. Nowhere in all the world can you go and find an institution so marvelously sustained as this Church in financial and other ways.

I attended a service in Atlanta, Georgia, where a minister of the Gospel was attempting to introduce the law of tithing, and after the service I was introduced to him by a member of his congregation, and I said to him: "I would like to bear testimony to you that you are on the right road, but instead of asking your people to pay tithing for ten months, why don't you ask them to pay their entire lifetime?"

He said: "Oh, Mr. Richards, we cannot go that far yet." And he probably could not in a man-made institution. But when you are in an organization that has been fashioned by God the Eternal Father, there is life, there is power in it, just like there is life in the human body.

#### POWER OF REVELATION CONTINUES

Some among us today say that there is no more revelation in the Church, that all revelations came in the beginning. It may be true that the major revelations that were to be written to be a guide to this people and to this Church came in the days of the Prophet Joseph. If you go into the orchard and plant a tree, the planting of the tree may be more demonstrative than gathering the fruit, but as long as that tree remains alive it yields its harvest, year after year, without replanting. When God organized this great Church and put his power in it, the power of the Holy Priesthood and the power of the Holy Ghost by which we might

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know the truth of all things and by which he makes manifest unto his servants all things, things which were, things which are, and things which are to come, it was not necessary that he should continue to reveal himself from heaven. The program had been revealed and a living organization established for its accomplishment.

I want to bear testimony to you today that the power of revelation is with this Church, that these men whom we voted this morning to sustain as prophets, seers and revelators, are prophets, seers and revelators. If there is one thing I know as well as I know that I live, it is that God, the eternal Father, has sustained me and blessed me with power of leadership far beyond my ability, in the positions of presidency I have held in this Church. I know it so well that I would not assume to undertake the responsibilities that are mine at present if I did not know that the spirit of revelation and inspiration and divine guidance were in this Church.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF WELFARE PROGRAM

I have only mentioned a few of the things that the Church has accomplished. Since our appointment as the Presiding Bishopric six months ago yesterday, we have had the privilege of meeting the executive officers of eighty of the stakes of Zion. We have met in a regional capacity and in these meetings we have had the executive officers, the presidents of stakes, their counselors, the high councils, the bishoprics of wards, and the men upon whom the responsibility of the leadership of this Church rests, and we have felt impressed by their power. In a few instances we have felt that there was a lack of understanding, we have felt that some of our leaders were on the outside and had not a full grasp of the importance of their work. These meetings have been held particularly in the interest of our Welfare Program, and I want to bear testimony to you today that it is my conviction that this Welfare movement that has been introduced by the leaders of this Church is one of the great undertakings of the Church, and the further we get into it and the clearer our vision becomes the more important we will realize this to be. It will do more than feed the hungry and clothe the naked. It is bringing together in a common cause the hearts of men and women so that should the time come that shall be darker than we have yet known they will know how to stand shoulder to shoulder. We have heard some fine reports, we have seen some fine work being done. We learned in one place that in a ward of 200 people 65 of them turned out one day to thin a beet patch. In another place so many turned out that they were through before the day was over, and turned to weeding the streets of the city. We learned in our last meeting at Idaho Falls that in one stake each quorum of the Priesthood consisting of eleven quorums of Elders, four quorums of Seventies, one High Priests quorum, and the High Council and Stake Presidency—each had a work project for the welfare of this new movement, and the thing about it that impressed us was the type of men who are turning out to work shoulder to shoulder in the field. Representing the Stake Presidency and the High Council, were the mayor of

the city, the city land appraiser, the editor of the Journal, the president of a college, a seminary teacher, a probate judge, a college professor, chairman of the county commissioners, two high school teachers, two city councilmen, a rural mail carrier and the State water master. Now, can you imagine what it is doing for that type of men when they are out in the field together as a quorum, bearing the Priesthood of God, and laboring together for their less fortunate brethren and sisters?

#### EFFECT ON CHURCH MISSIONARY SYSTEM

No doubt one of the great benefits of this movement will be the effect it will have on the missionary system of the Church. I was in the mission field when the "March of Time" was shown and I know something of the value that it will be to our missionaries. I said to the missionaries in the South that I was convinced that in the not far distant future we would cease to ring door bells and ask the privilege of delivering our message, but we would go to the doors to answer the calls that would come in to know more about our people. Incidentally, in closing may I add, that of all the great achievements of this Church that are far beyond the wisdom and the power and the ability of mortal man, that would indicate that the Spirit of God is in this work, is the great missionary system of the Church.

I pray God to bless us, and to enable us to use the means that are ours, to press on to the end, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

#### ELDER BRYANT S. HINCKLEY

*President of the Northern States Mission*

Through the kindness of our great-hearted and benevolent President, many of the mission presidents are permitted to come to General Conference, to bring their problems here, to discuss ways and means of promoting the missionary work, and of course to be inspired to a renewed dedication to the great task which is theirs.

You will pardon me if I make some reference to missionary work. Before I left for a mission I talked with a man in this city of reputed wisdom, who argued that if the Church continued to maintain its missionary system it would become impoverished, broken down, and driven into bondage. The answer I made to him then was in broad terms something like this: If this Church or any other organization can, by some process, translate money into character and manhood and build faith in the hearts of people, and establish in their minds the great ideals that go with a settled faith in God, they have done something that will perpetuate them in the earth.

I asked a man today how many years he and his family had given to the missionary work—and he is not an old man. He said: "Forty years, and members of my family have labored in sixteen different missions." If the men who are before me were to compute the years they