

SECOND DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

Conference reconvened at 2 p. m., Friday, April 7.

President David O. McKay, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted this, the fourth session of the Conference, and announced that the music for this session would be furnished by the *Nebo Stake Choir*, J. D. Christensen, Director.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Do What Is Right."

Elder John C. Todd, President of the Gridley Stake offered the opening prayer.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

President Grant was advised to conserve his strength this afternoon, and so he is following the advice of his physician. There is nothing serious, however, nothing about which to be alarmed. He is listening in to the services and is with us in spirit.

The *Nebo Stake Choir* sang "Recessional" (DeKoven), Irene Provostgaard, soloist.

ELDER JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

I sincerely trust, my brethren and sisters, that I may have an interest in your faith and prayers during the moment or two that I shall stand before you this day.

AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

I am gratified to know that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as it has been revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, is true. I am grateful for my membership in this Church. I am particularly grateful, my brethren and sisters, for the opportunity that has been afforded me in visiting some of the stakes of Zion this past year, and in becoming acquainted with you.

I have nothing in my heart but gratitude and appreciation for the association that is mine with the leadership of this Church. I have found these men to be inspired leaders of the Lord, with but one desire in their hearts, and that to diligently labor for the benefit and the welfare of the membership of this great Church.

To me, the Church has two objectives. The first one is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. That has been and is being accomplished through the efforts of the young men and women who are representing the Church in the world today, under the inspired leadership of the mission presidents.

THE VALUE OF COUNSEL

The next objective, as I understand it, is that one which has to do with the entire membership of the Church, to see that they are counseled, advised, exhorted, and stimulated to the utmost to observe all that the Lord requires of his people.

A statement of one of the ancients impresses upon us the value of counsel, "Where no counsel is, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety." In the restoration of the Church organization the Lord placed in it offices and officers for the purpose of counseling the people, that they might live and be in safety. The first great counselor to the people is the President of the Church, a prophet, an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the right to counsel and advise the people in all things, be they temporal or spiritual.

We accept the President of the Church as a prophet of the Lord. The Lord reveals to him his mind and will, as it pertains to us. Amos of old said, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." And we have a prophet in our midst, through whom the Lord makes known his mind and will.

The President of the Church and the prophet of the Lord holds another prerogative, another right, by virtue of his calling, which none of us should ever question, the right to raise a voice of warning when any issue arises that endangers the moral, temporal, or spiritual welfare of the people.

The two counselors of the President have the right to counsel, advise, and exhort us. The Council of the Twelve are sent to the stakes periodically to advise and counsel the people, and to build up the Kingdom. We have the First Council of the Seventy, Stake Presidents, and Bishops, sharing the responsibility of teaching the people. There is also another great group of counselors to the people. This group of counselors is found in every ward. They may number from forty to probably one hundred and twenty-five. We call them Teachers, men endowed with the Priesthood sent out to counsel and teach the people at least once a month.

In the twentieth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the fiftieth to fifty-fifth verses, we read:

But when there is an elder present, he is only to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize,

And visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties.

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The teacher's duty is to watch over the Church always, and be with them and strengthen them;

And see that there is no iniquity in the Church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking.

And see that the Church meet together often, and also see that all members do their duty.

THE DUTY OF TEACHERS

These are the Teachers that have the direct contact with each and every family in the Church. These Teachers have definite responsibilities, and I should like to point out several of them. First, a Teacher should lead an exemplary life. Secondly, he should be prepared and understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He should approach his work with a prayerful attitude. He should visit regularly, and preclude all material and conversation that does not pertain to the monthly message. And finally, to follow the admonition as given to us in the revelation, to watch over the Church always, to be with and strengthen them, not only in times of prosperity, but in times of death, sickness, economic stress, and particularly where there are cases of inactivity in the ward.

There is no greater assignment to the Priesthood than watching over the Church. The missionary objective of the Church is a great one. It brings members into the Church. But this assignment of watching over the Church is just as important. It has its place, for with this assignment we keep those who come into the Church, active, interested and stimulated.

Those of us who are taught by these Teachers have some responsibilities. When these Teachers visit our homes they should be received as representatives either of the Presidency of the Church, the stake presidency, or the bishop of the ward. They should be regarded as servants of the Lord, receiving every courtesy. The evening paper should be laid aside, the radio turned off, the family called together, and the leading of the discussion turned over to the Teachers.

The Teachers have another obligation. It is their duty not only to call upon these families once a month, but to visit them often. They should think of them in terms of being shepherds of the flock. The greatest example of a real shepherd is found in the case of the Lord Jesus, when he instructed Peter to "feed my sheep and feed my lambs," and then told the beautiful story of the shepherd who had lost one of the fold, and leaving the other ninety-nine who were secure in the fold, hastened into the desert to rescue the lost one. The duty of the Teachers of the Church should always be to rescue the lost ones, bringing them back into the fold.

There isn't a parent who does not have the heartfelt desire of having his son or daughter understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Complaints are often heard about our young people attending institutions of learning, and coming in contact with the theories of men, which have disrupted their faith in and attitude toward religion. If we take advantage, brethren and sisters, of these visits, permitting our boys and girls to

participate in the discussion, thus receiving an understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they will be fortified, when attending other institutions, against the doctrines of men.

There isn't an individual in this Church, who has the interest of the youth at heart, but who would be thrilled to have his boy or his girl stand up and say, as Ruth of old said to her companion: "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God." In teaching the people, it should be one of our objectives to touch the hearts of the youth.

This teaching and counseling is in full accord with the first organization of the Church. We find that the Apostle Paul, in speaking to the Ephesian Saints, said:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors, and teachers;

For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

In this day of the restored Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, he has again set some apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers for the purpose of counseling the people, perfecting the Saints, until we all come to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and his purposes, and a unity of the faith.

If we fulfil the obligation that rests upon us, we will consider this matter of teaching the people as the highest and the most important calling that can come to us in the stakes and the wards of Zion.

THE CHURCH TO BE A STANDARD TO THE WORLD

The Lord has given us a definite mission to fulfil to the world. This Church and people are to become a light unto the world, a beacon on a hill, for he said to us, in the 115 Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 5:

Verily I say unto you all: Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations.

The light of this Church will be a standard to the world, insofar as we strengthen its membership, individually and collectively.

I sincerely pray that the Lord will bless us that we may have in our hearts always a burning testimony of the divine origin of this great organization and its purposes, that when the day comes to stand before the nations we shall be prepared to stand as a source of truth, inspiration, and good works, which I pray will be the achievement of all of us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen,