

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

To the minute!

Obedient to my usual custom, I want to thank this choir for the splendid music which it has rendered.

Remember, please, brethren and sisters, to drive carefully. Let us have no accident if it be in any way possible to avoid it. One police officer has sent word asking that I be good enough to add to my slogan, and I use his words: "Please ask the pedestrians to show a little sense."

The congregation sang the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel".

Elder Alonzo J. Gilbert, President of the Idaho Stake offered the closing prayer.

SECOND DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

The fourth session of the great Conference convened Saturday afternoon, October 5, at 2 p. m.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

We are again blessed with the presence of President Grant at this service, and we are grateful to our Heavenly Father for this blessing. President Grant has asked me to conduct the services.

The music this afternoon will be furnished by members of the Tabernacle Choir. Not all of the members can attend, owing to their being employed in places from which they cannot be excused, but those who can attend are here. While *we* sang very well this morning, I suppose we will have to admit that *they* can sing better than we did.

The choir is under the direction of J. Spencer Cornwall. Elder Alexander Schreiner is at the organ.

The choir and the congregation sang the hymn: "O Ye Mountains High," by Charles W. Penrose.

The opening prayer was offered by President Joseph R. Christiansen, of Moroni Stake.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "Holy Spirit, Truth Divine," by Handel.

ELDER JOSEPH F. MERRILL*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My Brethren and Sisters: We Latter-day Saints are certainly a peculiar people, due in part to our characteristic religious beliefs and claims. Yet we are a very practical people, combining religious faith and the affairs of daily life into what we may call a "way of life." It is to some phases of this "way of life" that I wish to call your attention.

We gladly accept the view of the Psalmist, declared in these words: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." (Psalms 8:4, 5)

OBSERVANCE OF LAWS OF CHURCH WINS RESPECT

A few weeks ago I heard President Clark tell a factual story of the failure of a fine upstanding young man to be employed by a large financial organization. The young man possessed ability, a fine personality, a good education and excellent initiative. He had been a valiant worker in the Church. The opening with the organization was intended to lead to an important executive position. Our brother failed of employment because he was found to be smoking.

His prospective employer knew the Church teaches the Word of Wisdom, and further, that the young man in question had formerly both taught and practiced the Word of Wisdom. So why did he take up smoking? President Clark did not say. But was it not because he lacked moral courage and foolishly thought smoking would help him to succeed in the business world?

President Clark's statement reminded me of a conversation I had 28 years ago with our late lamented Simon Bamberger, former governor and long a prominent business man of Utah and a non-Mormon. At the time of our chat Mr. Bamberger said he personally interviewed the applicants for important jobs with his companies. "If a Mormon applied we preferred that he be a returned missionary," he said, "but never employed him if he admitted that he even occasionally drank coffee or liquor, or smoked a cigarette." To my question "why" Mr. Bamberger answered, "I know these young men taught your Word of Wisdom while missionaries. On coming home if they fail to live the Word of Wisdom, I believe the answer is one of two things—they are either weaklings or hypocrites. The Bamberger Company wants neither weaklings nor hypocrites in its employ." Neither did the great organization of which President Clark spoke want a weakling or a hypocrite in its employ.

All the world who have heard of the teachings of Mormonism know that the Church stands for total abstinence from the use of narcotic drinks and drugs, including tea, coffee, liquor and tobacco. But there are some members of the Church who admit they took to the use of one or more of these forbidden things in the belief that it would help them socially, professionally or in business. Was and is this a mistaken belief? Certainly very many desirable opportunities have been lost by our people, as indicated by the examples just mentioned, because they lacked the moral courage or the good judgment to say "no" when they were tempted.

A little study of the matter will convince us that the weak always admire the strong, the unclean delights to see the clean, the foolish envy the wise. In this drifting, sinful world a clean, high type, beautiful character is beloved by the multitude even though the vast majority of them do not attain to his high moral plane of living. No member of the Church,

young or old, male or female, will ever handicap himself or herself in the association with decent people by maintaining the high moral standards of living advocated by the Church. On the contrary, smoking and drinking by reputedly good Mormons will always hurt them, never help them, in gaining respect from worth-while non-members. They may succeed, but it will be in spite of their lapses rather than because of them.

CHARACTERISTIC DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH

But let us go further and be reminded that "unto whom much is given much is required." The Latter-day Saints make many more religious professions than do ordinary Christians. We have many characteristic doctrines, among which are those relating to the personality of the members of the Godhead, of the divine calling of Joseph Smith, of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, of the universality of the resurrection of the dead, of salvation for the dead, of the eternity of temple marriages, of personal pre-existence in the spirit world, and several others. The God whom we worship is a real personal being having the very form in which we ourselves are made, a God who hears and answers acceptable prayers and gives revelations to those worthy of and entitled to them; a God who said "this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Pearl of Great Price, Moses 1:39)

Another characteristic and basic doctrine of Mormonism is that of eternal progression. We are spirit children of our Father in heaven and were conscious, intelligent, spirit-body personalities in the forms we now possess at the time of the great rebellion in heaven when Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, fought with the Father's loyal hosts, among whom we were numbered, in order to establish force as the dominant factor in man's salvation. Lucifer (Satan) and his rebels were overcome and cast out, coming down to earth where they have been ever since.

SATAN'S INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD

These things are well-taught among us so that we understand them in outline, at least. My purpose now in reminding you of them is to call your attention to the fact that Satan, a spirit brother of ours, is a real existent personal being with a spirit body and is here among us with a multitude of helpers. He is infinitely more than a mere idea, a thought, or figment of the imagination. Now a thing sad to see is that Satan has enormous influence and power among men which he exercises to their hurt, sorrow and death. What makes this particularly sad to see is that it is wholly unnecessary for men to yield to Satan's power. God has given each one of us the strength, with His help, to put Satan behind us. In yielding to him men do not live up to their high privileges. They seem not to remember who they are—sons of a royal Father, the supreme commander of the universe, a Father who loves them so much that He gave Jesus Christ, His greatly beloved, first-born and only begotten Son in the flesh, to die a tortuous, ignominious death that they might

have the opportunity of being redeemed and live again forever in His glorious presence. Yes, brethren and sisters, God has given us the power and clearly indicated the way to overcome Satan.

FREE AGENCY A BLESSING FROM GOD

But let us ever remember, in this connection, one thing more—God has given us our free agency. In this connection it is also well to remember the truth expressed by a beautiful hymn in these words:

Know this, that every soul is free
To choose his life and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth is given,
That God will force no man to heaven.

He'll call, persuade, direct aright,
And bless with wisdom, love and light;
In nameless ways be good and kind;
But never force the human mind.

Freedom and reason make us men;
Take these away what are we then?

People often complain that God is either non-existent or merciless and devoid of love, otherwise He would not permit such a monstrous and inhuman tragedy as is today being enacted in Europe and elsewhere. But no one who understands the Father's doctrine of free agency can ever give any sympathy or support to such complaints. But time does not permit me to give further attention now to this point.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD INHERITED BY HIS CHILDREN

I wish to give emphasis to the fact that since we are spirit children of our Father in heaven it is perfectly natural that we should possess at least in embryo and microscopic quantities the attributes of our Father. And looking at these attributes as they are developed in our finest characters—as they were beautifully exhibited in the earthly life of Jesus, for example, we may get concrete ideas about the nature of God who possesses these attributes in perfection.

One of these is intelligence. Indeed, intelligence is His glory. Intelligence governed by wisdom is also the glory of man, the attribute that chiefly sets him apart from the mere animal. Possessing this attribute it is easy to understand why it is right for him to be given his free agency. We are therefore entirely in accord with the doctrine expressed in the Declaration of Independence at the birth of our nation—that man is endowed by his Creator with the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR OWN ACTS

But free agency entails upon man a weighty obligation—that of being responsible for his conduct. And particularly is this the case in full measure in our land of liberty. As residents of America and as members of the Church, privileged as we are with an understanding

more or less complete of who we are, of our relations to one another, to our fellow-men, to our country and to our God, we have indeed been given much—are more highly favored than nearly all other men. But we say this humbly and thankfully, not boastfully. We say it also in full realization of the fact that because the Lord has given us much He will in justice exact much at our hands. He will hold us accountable for all that we do.

And here let me particularize a little, indicating a few of our obligations. The Lord requires us to develop the attributes with which we were born. We cannot be saved in ignorance. The law of growth is activity. No one is exempt from this law. But to grow properly the activity must be suited to the growth desired. Playing foot-ball may develop an athlete but it will not make a musician. An intellect governed by wisdom is man's proudest possession. Conduct actuated by the golden rule yields him the greatest happiness. Responsibilities fully met contribute most rapidly to God-like growth.

But in all of these things let us remember that Satan is ever near to handicap us if he can. It is easier to drift than to row. So Satan always prompts us to drift. To grow strong in body, mind or spirit, one or all, self-discipline is absolutely essential. But if we please our Maker we must grow; therefore we must discipline ourselves, that is, we must bring our conduct into harmony with the inexorable laws of divinity that govern growth. I have already indicated a rule of conduct that is in complete harmony with the great law of moral growth—the golden rule.

Now to particularize still more. We Latter-day Saints profess so much that logic, reason, and consistency require us to demonstrate our honesty and sincerity by living according to our teachings, e. g., observe the Word of Wisdom. But this is not all. The Lord requires us thus to live in order to win His favor. And He cannot be deceived. He knows our hearts and our thoughts.

Are we reasonable and wise in what we do? To know what is best to say, what is best to do and to know how best to do it is to possess inspired wisdom, probably our greatest gift. If we live worthy of divine guidance, as we are privileged to do, we shall not go very far astray. We spend great sums and send thousands of missionaries forth to preach the Gospel. Do we so live that our lives are sermons in harmony with the teachings of our missionaries? If not, why not? If not, we shall certainly be condemned. Let us not forget it.

We live in this land choice above all other lands. Are we worthy to enjoy its incomparable blessings? Do we discipline ourselves, self-imposing upon us whatever struggles and sacrifices may be necessary in order that we shall preserve inviolate the principles bequeathed to us by the fathers of our country, many of whom spilled their blood and gave their lives that their descendants might be free?

INTELLIGENT VOTING COMMENDED

Brethren and sisters, the obligations of American citizenship are

numerous and sometimes heavy. But to a genuine Latter-day Saint, diligently trying to keep the commandments of God, it is a real pleasure to bear these responsibilities. May I remind you that among the greatest of them is the duty of wise voting. Perhaps few, if any, of us fully meet this responsibility. To do so we must keep ourselves informed of the necessary pertinent facts relative to candidates, remain free from the influence of prejudice and all deceptive propaganda, give no support of any kind to demagogues and their deceptive promises, but be willing to labor and to sacrifice as much as necessary that our government and our country shall be kept free from the hands of those who would despoil them.

To refresh your memories of the attitude of the Church in these matters please re-read Section 134 of the Doctrine and Covenants on "A Declaration of Belief Regarding Governments and Laws," adopted by a unanimous vote at a general assembly of the Church held at Kirtland, Ohio, August 17, 1835.

The following taken from the Declaration is a key sentence: "We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life." The Church cannot look with any degree of favor upon any proposition whatsoever that would oppose to the slightest extent this statement.

Brethren and sisters, our free America, the America of our fathers, is gravely in danger, not from enemies without but from enemies within. It is the duty of all Latter-day Saints, living under the stars and stripes, as well as of all loyal citizens, to forget their petty differences and their ignoble personal selfishness, and rally to her support. This may best be done by holding inviolate the Charter of our liberties—the Constitution of the United States and all good laws made in harmony therewith. This certainly requires that we shall be careful and elect to make and administer the laws only people who are wise, patriotic and morally worthy—only men and women of high character.

God bless America, God bless His faithful children, and give them the strength, moral courage and wisdom, through their desire and worthiness, to keep His commandments I humbly pray in Christ's name. Amen.

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG

Of the First Council of the Seventy and President of the New England Mission

I am happy to come from Boston to attend this Conference, and to report to the parents of the missionaries laboring in New England that they are a noble band of young men and women, and we are proud of them. They work very hard and it does not take long for them to prove themselves true servants of God.