

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

I should like to repeat the slogan, "Drive carefully, and pedestrians walk sensibly."

Elder Leo J. Muir, President of the Northern States Mission, offered the benediction.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.

**FIRST DAY****AFTERNOON MEETING**

Conference reconvened at 2 o'clock p. m., Friday, April 4.

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

The time has come to open the second session of our Conference. We are blessed again this afternoon with the presence of President Heber J. Grant, who is presiding, and he has asked President Clark to conduct the meeting.

There are present on the stand this afternoon President Grant and his two Counselors; the eleven Apostles; all of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies; and all the Presiding Bishopric.

The congregation and the Brigham Young University Chorus and members of the Provo Duo Stake Choir sang the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation"—Words by Keene.

Elder Charles S. Clark, President of the Cassia Stake, offered the opening prayer.

The Choir sang "Glory to God in the Highest"—Pergolesi.

**ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH***Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I wish all you fine people in the body of the house could see this audience from the stand. It is a wonderful sight, every seat filled and people standing, both in the doorways and in the gallery.

I trust that I may be blessed of the Lord today, that I may express to you the feelings of my heart with reference to the work with which we are identified. After the wonderful session we had this morning I feel that it would be just too bad if I should try to talk myself and express my own personal feelings, unless the Lord helps me.

**THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD GIVEN FOR OUR GOOD**

As I travel around among the people I am sometimes astonished to find that some appear to feel that they are doing the Lord a favor

by belonging to His Church. They seem to have an idea that when they keep the commandments of the Lord, that they are doing something to please somebody else.

I doubt that the people of the world realize that the reason they are in the predicament they are in today is because they have neglected to follow the advice of our Heavenly Father. The uncertainty, the distress, the anguish that is prevalent in so many parts of the world is traceable directly to violating His commandments. The Lord, when He gave to us the Ten Commandments, gave us advice for our good. It was not for His benefit, except that He is always happy when we do right. But I am thinking now of the commandments that came down from Sinai: "Thou shalt honor the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." That was not to please Him. The advice that He gave in that regard, and elsewhere, has been for our good and for our benefit.

When He commanded us that we should honor the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, He only gave us the information that would help us to enjoy our lives. That is all.

"Thou shalt not steal." When that commandment was given it was intended that if people in this world would be honest, that they would derive the benefit. Only this morning our beloved President quoted a portion from the Doctrine and Covenants, referring to the laws that govern us:

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven from before the foundation of this earth, upon which every blessing is predicated.

So the Lord, in His kindness, seeing the attitude of His children, and knowing that they would need guidance, gave to us the Ten Commandments, and other commandments that have been given from time to time, to help us to find happiness. You observe people running to and fro in the world, seeking happiness but not finding it. If they would only pause long enough to accept the Lord's advice happiness would follow, but they will find it in no other way.

#### BLESSINGS FOLLOW THE KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS

It is strange that any member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should have to be urged to say his prayers, and yet there are some people who do not pray in secret or have their family prayers. Yet unless we pray we lose the protection that prayer offers. (D. & C. Sec. 20:32-34.)

The Lord has given us the privilege of contributing one-tenth of our interest, for His Church, for the development of His work in the world. Those who pay their tithing receive their blessing. If we do not desire the blessing, we may withhold our contribution. The Lord promises His blessing if we honor His law and not otherwise.

Everything that He has asked us to do is for our good, not for somebody else's benefit particularly, though, of course, it benefits others when we set a good example. With this great body of Priesthood and the membership of the Church assembled here, what an influence we ought to have, if we are keeping the commandments of the Lord.

The President referred to the fact, this morning, that there were offices in the Church, and that men who hold those offices ought not to expect to hold them unless they magnify them. Why? Because they receive no benefit from it, only as they keep the commandments of the Lord and magnify their callings. It is of no particular advantage to be a High Priest or a Seventy or an Elder in this Church, just to hold that office. But if we live up to the teachings of the Lord, if we do what He asks us to do, then we have promise of a blessing. The Lord, all the years from the beginning of time, has been ready to bless His children whenever they will permit Him to do it.

There are some who do things they ought not to do, and yet they hope for a blessing. We sing: "God Bless America." What a wonderful hymn that is! How beautifully it is sung in large congregations! But God cannot bless America if the people who live in America refuse to keep His commandments. We must earn the blessing if we would receive it.

We are commanded by the Lord to teach our children what they should do, that they should have faith, that they should repent, and that they should be baptized when eight years of age; and He says that if we fail in our responsibility, the sin be upon our heads. What does that mean? It means, to me, that if our children fall away because of our neglect and because of our carelessness, there will come a time when we realize that we did not prepare them for the blessings the Lord wanted to give them, and the result is that they have failed to receive the blessings and the sorrow will be upon our own heads.

I am grateful that I belong to a church that does not compel obedience. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not coerce. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of love, intelligence, a wonderful guide for our lives. That is what it is for. It is for everybody. Yet we find people who resist the very thing that would make them happy. They will not live the Gospel but seek happiness only in the pleasures of life that will not endure.

I think this great organization that we belong to ought to be able to set such an example that people in our neighborhoods, not members of the Church, seeing our good works, would be constrained to glorify the name of our Heavenly Father. That is the way I feel with regard to that. All that we need to do is to set an example, be good men and good women, and they will observe it. Then perhaps they will afford us the opportunity to teach them the things that they do not know.

Every blessing that we desire must be earned by obeying the law upon which that blessing is conditioned. Now, we understand that, brethren and sisters. How unwise we are if we fail, if we ourselves decline to do the thing that will earn us a blessing, when we know that we cannot obtain it in any other way except to earn it. That is the difference in the attitude of those who understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the people of the world. I have had people tell me: "Oh, it doesn't make so much difference what you do. After a while everybody will be saved in the Kingdom of God." It used to be quite customary when I was in the mission field in early days, to hear that. That is what

the devil is telling the world. That is the way the Adversary teaches. If he can just keep them doing wrong all the time, and neglecting that which is right, he has them just where he wants them to be, and he has us where he wants us, when we fail to do right.

#### THE PRIESTHOOD TO BE HONORED

To be ordained to the Priesthood may not prove a blessing. We should not at any time feel that it will be a blessing to us, unless we honor it, unless we magnify it, and have in our hearts the desire that the Lord intended we should have, when He bestowed that gift upon us, and we should always desire to do good.

What a wonderful group we have enrolled in this organization! Lovers of all that is good and beautiful, marvelous choirs that come from different parts of the Church to sing for us here; to supplement the delight that the Tabernacle Choir and Organ give to us; this lovely building in which to meet, not another like it in the world. We have every blessing that the world has anywhere, plus the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Of course, the world does not understand it if we say it that way, but we ought to understand it. Everything that I can find that is good in any church in all the world, is a part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No other church can say that.

This is the Lord's Church. I sometimes hear people speak of it as "our church." This is the Lord's Church. Our Heavenly Father ordained that it should come at this particular period of the world's history, and He directed that it receive the name of His beloved Son. Fortunate are we if while we are members of it we live up to the opportunities that it offers, lest we fall into transgression and lose our faith and forfeit the blessing that the Lord desired us to possess.

#### ADVICE TO SEEK FOR IMPROVEMENT

Now, brethren, let us do better than we have ever done before. Let us renew our determination to be real Latter-day Saints, and not just make-believe. I do not think I ought to be talking just like that to this group, because I feel that perhaps the cream of the Church, very much of it, is in this building; but I do not know anybody who can not do a little better than he has been doing, if he makes up his mind.

I think that with the distress everywhere, with the prediction that the Lord made in the first Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, that "peace should be taken from the earth," we must feel that that time has come. Surely we ought to take stock of ourselves, and our homes should be the abiding place of prayer and gratitude and thanksgiving. Husbands should be kind to their wives, and wives considerate of their husbands. Parents should hold the love of their children by their righteous living. Our homes would then not only be the abiding place of prayer and thanksgiving, but would be the place where our Father could bestow His choicest blessings, because of our worthiness.

I pray that the peace that cometh from our Heavenly Father may abide in our hearts and in our homes, that we who have been honored by

fellowship in the Church of His Beloved Son may appreciate that honor every day, and so live when the race is run that we shall have earned an inheritance in the Celestial Kingdom. We must not surrender to temptation, but should meet our problems in the spirit of love and kindness toward all men, ever serving God and keeping His commandments. And we are always serving Him when we are blessing our kind; do not forget that.

#### FAITH SHOWN BY GOOD WORKS

We cannot expect to earn blessings without earnest effort. We will be required to make what appears to some to be sacrifices. I suppose people think when they pay their tithing that they are making a sacrifice, but they are not; they are making a real investment that will return an eternal dividend. Our Heavenly Father gives us all that we have. He places all in our hands, authorizing us to retain for our own use nine-tenths of it, and then He asks that we put His tenth where He directs, where He knows it will accomplish the most good in developing His Church.

When we heard the reports this morning of this great Church, the financial report impressed me much. To know that a great organization like this, with its multitudes of people, functioning in so many ways, in the midst of the world's turmoil and distress is in such a condition that one of the Presidency of the Church could stand here and truthfully say to us this Church is out of debt. With the nations and most of the people in debt, yet the Church has been so managed that it is out of debt. Let us think about it. Let us sustain the Church. Let us follow the advice of the leadership of the Church. Let us so live that the Lord can bless us as He blesses the Church.

The Lord gave one commandment to the people, in which He said this was the only church in all the world that He is well pleased with, and He emphasized that by saying, or inferring at least, that that did not mean individually. That meant the Church as a whole. But how wonderful it would be if He could say of us that He is pleased with all of us as individuals.

God grant that we may so live and let our light so shine that others, seeing our good works, will be constrained to glorify His name. Let there be in our hearts love and compassion and consideration and charity for every soul that we come in contact with. Then we can consistently kneel down in our own homes and invoke the favor of the Lord upon those that we love, and upon all those with whom we associate, and when life's labor is complete may we find that we have listened to the whispering of that still, small voice that always guides us in the path of righteousness, and know that it has meant for us the opening of the door to the Celestial kingdom, for ourselves and those we love, to go forward throughout the ages, not unhappy eternally, but happy eternally, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.