

you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you. (D. and C. 78:7.)

#### SAFETY IN FOLLOWING COUNSEL OF CHURCH LEADERS

Today you and I are here because we listened to the counsel of President Brigham Young, and turned deaf ears to the pleadings of men like James J. Strang, Sidney Rigdon and others who would have led us from the path of truth and right. I bear you my witness in all humility that if your children and my children, our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren, remain faithful to this Church it will be because you and I remained steadfast in the testimony that these men are the prophets of the living God and that we must follow their counsel if we would be saved in the days of peril. Therefore, "stand ye in holy places and be not moved," that we might abide the day of the coming of the Son of Man and be caught up in the clouds of heaven to meet our Redeemer when He comes on earth to reign, and reign with Him a thousand years with our children and the redeemed of our Father's house, I pray humbly, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

##### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I must confess that as disturbing as it is to stand before this congregation it is not so much so as the experience I have already been through this morning in presenting the nationwide broadcast. I never approach the microphone before a broadcast without fear and trembling, even though I have presented nationwide broadcasts from this pulpit every week, with rare exceptions, for nearly twelve years. I have a great deal of respect for five or ten minutes of time; I know what it is worth on the radio. I know that it is sufficient time for a man to get himself into a great deal of trouble. I know that multiplied by the number of people here, it is a great responsibility, and I know that a message can come forth in that time if the Lord so directs, and to this end I ask your faith and prayers.

#### A SURVEY RESULTING IN REARRANGEMENT OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I am indebted to Dr. Carlton Culmsee of the Brigham Young University for inviting my attention to a survey recently conducted by a professor of psychology. The survey queried students and teachers in two of the major institutions of learning in America, one in the far west, and one in the middle west. The result announced in the press earlier in the year, was the rearrangement of the order of the Ten Commandments. The presumption of rearranging the order of the Ten Commandments is exceeded only by the manner in which they were rearranged. These many students and teachers were asked to list the Ten Commandments in what they considered to be the order of their im-

portance, and the results indicate facts with which you and I are already familiar.

For example, the Fourth Commandment, referring to observance of the Sabbath day was moved to ninth place. I am sure that we see the evidences of this feeling all about us. I would hesitate to make the mistake that some in ancient Israel made in particularizing too much on what should and should not be done on the Sabbath day, but I am sure that most Latter-day Saints know when they are keeping the Sabbath day and when they are not keeping it, in spite of all the rationalizing that we do. I must confess I am still old-fashioned enough to be shocked to go among the Wards and Stakes and find Ward or Stake officers excused for deer hunting, or pheasant hunting, or for fishing—not fishers of men, by the way. I am not sure that this is not a day on which to catch up with all the odd jobs that have been neglected during the week. I am sure that it is not a day for public celebration or for athletic contests. I am disturbed in my thoughts when buses come into my neighborhood and take our young men and women off for a day of Sabbath skiing. I am sure in my own heart that it is not a day for patronizing places of commercial entertainment, and I am sure, to repeat, that we know in our hearts when we are and when we are not keeping this day of rest and worship and good works.

Another of the significant changes in this survey was the moving of the Third Commandment to tenth place. That has reference to profanity, to the taking of the name of the Lord in vain. The students so queried considered that of least importance. I am inclined to believe that it would have been eliminated entirely, except that there was the place to fill, and they had to include it somewhere. Our brother, Joseph Fielding Smith, has recently written two articles that have appeared in current issues of the *Improvement Era* on the proper use of the name of Deity, which I commend for your reading and re-reading. I am sure that this revolting practice of prevalent profanity is grievous in the sight of our Father in heaven, and an offense to every sensitive and thoughtful and reverent man or woman.

Another most significant change was this: The First Commandment was relegated to the seventh position, that one that has reference to the Lord God and our relationship to Him. In other words, it means that in the thinking of these university students, and I believe they are a barometer of thinking generally, the Lord has been relegated to a place of secondary importance in the scheme of religion, and religion in their minds has been reduced to a system of ethical standards, and when we reduce religion to a mere code of ethics we have stripped it of its life and power.

The complete order of rearrangement was as follows, with the original scriptural number in parenthesis:

1. Thou shalt not kill. (6)
2. Thou shalt not steal. (8)
3. Thou shalt not commit adultery. (7)
5. Honor thy father and thy mother. (5)
6. Thou shalt not covet. (10)

7. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods before me. (1)  
 8. Thou shalt not make unto me a graven image. (2)  
 9. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (4)  
 10. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God in vain. (3)

I am sure that the Lord knew what He was doing, that He is enough of a teacher, to state first things first, and I repeat, that the presumption of rearranging the order of the Ten Commandments according to their supposed current social importance is exceeded only by the significance of the order of this rearrangement. The fact is if we were to keep the First Commandment—and love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and have no other Gods before Him—all the others would follow in due course without any difficulty whatever.

#### TRUTH NEEDS NO EMBELLISHMENT

I am aware that we live in an age of great exaggeration, of unguarded statement, of propaganda, as has so frequently been spoken of in this conference—that shouting is sometimes thought to be a substitute for truth, that there are those, the type of which you know as well as I, who believe if they shout a thing long enough and loud enough some of it will be believed regardless of its inherent truth or falsity.

It was invited to my attention recently by a student of Scripture, not of our Church, that the Savior of the world seldom indulged in the use of modifiers or intensifiers, or adjectives. He simply stated plain truth without undue embellishment, and I think this is a thought to keep well in mind in this day when everything is represented as being "colossal" "stupendous" or "Gargantuan" or "ultra" or something of the kind—whatever it is the "greatest" of whatever it is. In the face of such statements I remind myself that a truth quietly spoken carries its own weight, and we must go about our business quietly and earnestly with "the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness," (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 38:41), proclaiming that which we know to be true, with tactfulness, with plainness, and with unceasing diligence on all occasions.

If you can imagine the Sermon on the Mount littered with extravagant adjectives, you know what I mean. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." What could add to such conclusive statements? So, without any adjectives, I wish to add my testimony to yours that I know that God lives; that Jesus is the Christ; that Joseph Smith and all of his successors have been the representatives of God our Father on the earth in this dispensation—and that all men may come to that knowledge, and that we who have it may walk in harmony with it, I ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Choir sang "Thy Word is a Lantern"—Purcell.

Elder Paul C. Child, President of the Pioneer Stake, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.