

I looked at her for a minute, and then said: "Sister, if this were my Church, I would not take your tithing. But it is not my Church, it is the Lord's Church, and tithing is a principle upon which blessings of the Lord are predicated; and sister, if you have only earned twenty-five cents this week, I surely do think you need a blessing, so I would advise you to pay your tithing and be blessed." And I wrote her a receipt for two and a half cents. (We happened to have a coin of that denomination in Holland). She later emigrated to Utah and raised a fine family.

Many of those people lived under very meager circumstances, and could not save anything from week to week. And when we brought them the Gospel, they would say, "You would not expect us to pay tithing, would you?" And I would give them the same answer. I have seen family after family emigrate to this land, own their own homes, drive their own automobiles, educate their children, and send their boys and girls on missions. I want to tell you the spirit of sacrifice has not gone out of this Church.

I stood on the porch of a beautiful home in Idaho a few weeks ago with 160 acres of as fine irrigated land as I ever saw, surrounding that home, and the good brother, a convert to the Church, said to me: "My wife said, 'Father, if the Church asked for it, would you give it to them?'" And he straightened up and said, "I replied: 'Yes, mother, and there would not be a penny against it either.'" Surely the Lord has been gathering His Saints together unto Him, those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice.

#### CLOSING TESTIMONY AND BLESSING

God bless the Latter-day Saints. God bless you, my brethren and sisters. This is His work, and He is busy preparing the way for His coming. It is important that we harmonize our lives with His great program of preparation, and when the voice of the Lord comes unto us that we heed it and that we follow the leadership of those who are sent to guide us in the way of eternal truth. May the Lord bless every man and woman in this Church for their sacrifices for the building up of the Kingdom of God, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Tabernacle Choir sang, "Abide With Me"—Monk.

#### ELDER JOSEPH F. MERRILL

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

#### ACKNOWLEDGING THE HAND OF THE LORD IN TRIALS

Many years ago, my brethren and sisters, I became acquainted with a teaching in the 59th section of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, that to avoid offending God we must be willing to acknowledge his hand in all things. That teaching came strongly to my mind when we followed the casket of the mother of our seven children to the hillside. It again came to my mind nearly two years later when the body of our oldest

son, a fine, upstanding, clean young man was being lowered into the grave. There came over me at that time, as I witnessed that lowering, one of the most satisfying feelings I ever had, and these words: "The boy is absolutely secure."

I felt to thank the Lord that that was the case because I had that same feeling with respect to his mother. And more recently the same thought has come to me. I stood the test before. I want to tell you that with the Lord's help as I have received it in the past, I shall stand it again.

#### IMPORTANCE OF LIVING OUR RELIGION

When I heard two returned Mission Presidents speak Saturday afternoon, each appealing to the Latter-day Saints to live their religion, I felt that there is no advice that perhaps is more important than that. I felt then as I have felt many years during the past, that we are under an obligation to do that very thing.

When we go into the waters of baptism, when we partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and when we stand on our feet and bear testimony to the divinity of this work, we are thereby obligated as strongly as I know how it is possible to obligate a human soul to keep the commandments of the Lord. But it is not easy to do this. The influence of heredity, of environment and of evil power that is in the earth, personified or headed by Satan himself, are all opposed to our keeping the commandments of the Lord. To overcome all of these we must struggle, but may I say that my own belief is that the Lord gives every one of us the strength to keep His commandments if we will worthily and earnestly seek His help that we may do it.

We are faced, my brethren and sisters, those of us who stand here in the pulpit with a very heavy responsibility. You have come from far and wide; you have come to be spiritually fed; you have come up to be strengthened and instructed. Out of all the many timely questions and problems which face us, which shall we talk about? It has been my custom to think of this matter days before the Conference opens and try to get if I can some help in suggestion. I have done that same thing for this occasion, and I have committed to writing some notes that I will read in part, if not in all. The time is very short.

In the time allotted to me today I purpose speaking of a very live issue that is disturbing all liberty-loving Americans, none more than Latter-day Saints, but an issue that many fear to discuss publicly, especially the politicians.

#### PRACTICAL RELIGION THE NEED OF THE WORLD

It is trite to speak of the world-wide troublous times now existing and of the chaotic conditions that prevail everywhere. These matters furnish themes that are discussed in religious meetings perhaps more frequently than in other ordinary types of assemblies. This is true for the reason, probably, that more and more thoughtful people are coming to believe that a cure for the ills of this troubled world will be found, if it is found at all, in the teachings of Jesus.

In this view the Latter-day Saints are a unit. Their religion is a very practical religion—the one taught by the Master. In the 25th chapter of Matthew we find a beautiful parable, the closing words of which are as follows:

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee and hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

#### THE VALUE OF LIBERTY

A notable application of this doctrine of the Master is found in the Welfare Program of the Church. But the doctrine of service is not limited in its applications to the primary necessities of life—food, shelter and clothing. There are things of greater value than these and things for which men have given their lives all down through the ages. Liberty is one of these, national liberty and personal liberty, the liberty to talk, to work, to worship and to exercise our God-given free agencies, so long as we do not infringe upon similar rights of others.

We live in America, in a nation whose founders declared to all the world that “we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;—That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” You recognize, of course, that these statements are quoted from the Declaration of Independence.

To secure these rights the colonists fought the War of Independence through 8 years of blood, tears and terrible sufferings. To them liberty was more precious than life. For when it was won they would bequeath to their descendants the priceless heritage of freedom.

A few years after winning the war the founders of this Republic published another epoch-making document from which I quote the following:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

The Constitution thus spoken of consisted of seven Articles and became the supreme law of the land in 1788. Soon a Bill of Rights in the form of ten Amendments to the Constitution was proposed by Congress in 1789 and became a part of this great document two years later.

The first of these ten amendments is as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the

freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Thus by action of the people two history-making documents publicised to all the world the fact that in America was founded a nation, the purpose of which was to secure to every citizen the inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Hence our government exists for the individual rather than the individual for the government. To this concept of the purpose of government, totalitarianism is diametrically opposed, for it asserts that the individual exists for the State. Personal liberty is, therefore, non-existent in a totalitarian State.

But between principle and practice there is frequently a wide gulf. It was because of their religion that the Mormons suffered violent persecution, and were finally driven from the boundaries of civilization—from the settled areas of a land that guaranteed religious liberty. And this was in America, the only country in all the world in which, at the time, religious liberty was guaranteed by the fundamental law of the land. But the Mormons might have said as did Jesus of Nazareth "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." The coming of the Mormons to the arid wilderness of the Rocky Mountains proved to be not only a great blessing for them but for the nation also.

I speak of these things only in passing. They presented problems that were successfully solved by the settlers of these arid regions. We are faced today with many other weighty problems, the solution of which prevailed then. There are many dangers that threaten our inherited liberties, both those of the country and those of the individual citizen. Indeed, as I see it, this country has never faced a darker situation. This is due to many factors, one of which I shall discuss briefly.

#### THE "CLOSED SHOP" A MENACE TO LIBERTY

The very foundations upon which this country has been builded to become great and mighty are gravely threatened and her basic principles of personal liberty are fast fading away. Time will permit of mentioning only one of these. But it is the most basic of all, the one emphasized in the Declaration of Independence—"The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." When we deny an able-bodied man "the right to work" we rob him of his independence and destroy his happiness. It is this denial that faces myriads of willing workers in America today, because a new tyranny—one never dreamed of by the founders—has arisen, that of "the closed shop" including the check-off system.

#### PROFESSOR DOUGLAS JOHNSON'S VIEWS

Discussing this new tyranny Professor Douglas Johnson of Columbia University says—and I summarize a few of his paragraphs—that he was born when every American was a free man—free to work when, where, and how he pleased. Were he born in this age of bureaucratic control of industry and Union tyranny over labor, he would not be employed at the factory unless he joined the Union. He would not be

admitted to the Union unless a shortage of labor appeared in prospect. But if admitted he would have to pay from \$50 to \$200 or more in initiation fees in addition to dues and special assessments. The money for these payments he would never see, for it would be deducted from his pay before he would receive it.

Once on the job he would likely be told to go slow "for we're not going to work our heads off." If a fellow workman should be discharged for negligence and laziness a strike would be called demanding his reinstatement on the spurious plea that he was let out for Union activities—a violation of the law. If a worker refused to strike, believing the discharge was merited and attempted to continue work, he would be in danger of being severely handled and beaten, his car wrecked, his home picketed, etc. No protection for him would come from the sheriff, and the governor of the State would not order out the militia to stop mass picketing for fear of bloodshed.

Prof. Johnson goes on to say (I have omitted many of the details) this is not a mad dream but a calm statement of what has been happening, day after day, some of it here, some there, to countless American citizens—happening to honest family-loving, God-fearing American laboring men.

He asserts that a vast majority of our laboring men are outside of Unions. A vast majority of those inside are decent, honest, law-abiding citizens. Most of those inside and outside of Unions are liberty-loving. But all of them are held under a tyranny utterly un-American both in its origins and in its effects. It is a tyranny which denies to American workers their most fundamental rights, limits their freedom, stifles their initiative, checks their energies and holds them down to the low level of their less competent and less diligent fellows. It is a tyranny which preserves the right to strike (which nobody opposes in normal times) while denying to the many the "right to work." It places moderately paid workers at the mercy of highly paid agitators. Most of all it saps the independence of the worker, dampens his ambition and shuts for him the door of hope of a better future, lock-stepping him with indolent, less-competent and less ambitious associates.

Thus while the American laborer has gained much from the Union movement, which no one would wish to see him lose, he has also lost much which Prof. Johnson indicates but which I shall not consider here.

In the foregoing I have summarized a part of Dr. Johnson's article. He illustrated his statements by a number of specific examples the mention of which I omit. We all know the situation, at least in a general way, and we know it is rapidly becoming worse, and that the "closed shop" system is rapidly spreading. This is a system of force that places plants and institutions employing labor in the hands of selfish, irresponsible labor leaders, agitators and organizers who force owners, managements, laborers, the public and even government officials to do their unrighteous bidding. Thus freedom is crushed and the guarantees of our inspired Constitution are thrown to the winds. Where the "closed shop" comes in freedom goes out, and the inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" vanishes.

Now of one thing I feel sure. The vast majority of the patriotic, liberty-loving people of America want the guarantees of our inspired Constitution maintained. They want this choice land still to be and to remain the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

I have presented briefly and inadequately only one aspect of the gravely threatening situation. I hasten to say that the "closed shop" did not arise from nothing. It is seemingly the natural end result of many contributing factors. Capital and management are far from blameless in their treatment of labor and the public. Iniquitous ambition, unrestrained selfishness, rank injustice, severe oppression and cruel wrong have characterized both sides of the relations of capital and labor. "The pot cannot call the kettle black." But many laws have been passed to control capital and management. None has yet been passed to control labor, strange to say. What then is needed if liberty and right are to be preserved? Action, and still more action. The Lord helps those engaged in a good cause.

#### THE RIGHTS OF CAPITAL AND LABOR CALL FOR UNITY

Obviously both capital and labor should be controlled in the interest of the public welfare and human freedom, which certainly includes the "right to work." To secure this right why not let every one opposed to the tyranny and evils of the "closed shop" join a right-to-work league which shall secure through suitable legislative action an opening of the gates of opportunity to every one who is able and willing to work, independent of membership in any labor union or other organization. In other words, let us unite without delay to secure the laws and regulations necessary to insure to every worker the "right to work" without which the noble declaration that each of us has the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness becomes an idle mockery.

But a far better, much quicker, more desirable and vastly simpler plan is, under existing conditions, apparently in the realm of the ideal and therefore it must await the coming of better days. I refer to the Golden Rule plan.

There is a disagreement between employer and employee. In the light of Christ's teachings what is the right thing to do? Obviously these two parties should sit down and talk things over, each strongly motivated to treat the other as he would like to be treated, if all the circumstances were reversed. Let each one try hard to put himself in the other's shoes. To do this each one would have to recognize the other as a brother, and both should keep in mind their obligations to the public. Love and right, not hate and force must be the means employed to determine what is fair, honest, just and humane. Neither will ask for nor expect anything the Golden Rule could not award.

#### ECONOMIC PEACE THROUGH APPLICATION OF THE GOLDEN RULE

If a full sense of brotherhood, actuated by the real spirit of the Golden Rule, were in the mind and heart of every employer and of every employe in America, and of every one else who has any kind of

relations with his fellow men, then industrial, social, and economic peace in America would be born in a day. But alas this ideal condition is not in the offing. Instead we are faced with reality and a condition so pregnant with evil that we can save ourselves only by immediate, unceasing, wise, and powerful efforts. The preservation of our inherited liberties and of our God-given free agencies is worth every thing necessary for us to give in order that we might re-possess and maintain them. Otherwise, will not the America of the future be devoid of the essentials that have made the America we inherited, a land of glorious promise?

Latter-day Saints, is not our beautiful doctrine of eternal progression absolutely opposed to that of the "closed shop"? Force is the weapon used to bring about the "closed shop." But force when used as a weapon is Satan's club and therefore destructive of human rights.

Let us act before it is too late. May love, diligence and divine wisdom characterize all our efforts to preserve our liberties and faithfully serve the Lord I pray in the Master's name. Amen.

### ELDER MARVIN O. ASHTON

#### *First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

I do not think I ever appreciated the Gospel of Jesus Christ more in my life than I do at this time and have done during the past few days. There is a story told of a great king who built a big castle and stretched the wires from tower to tower. The only time the wires from tower to tower played a tune was when the tempest came up. I believe if there ever is a time when we appreciate the Gospel it is in time of storm, it is in time of tempest. That is when the Gospel plays its best tunes—when the storms rage the worst. May we always hear the music.

#### GRATITUDE EXPRESSED FOR KINDNESS

I would think myself and ourselves most thoughtless if we did not take this opportunity to thank the people of the Church for their kindness towards us. It is strange that Brother Merrill and I should be called upon, one right after the other. I certainly sympathize with him in the trial he is going through. From Hawaii, Canada, and Mexico, and every point of this Church has come kindness. Whatever has been our lot in the way of grief, if you folks had your way, from President Grant and his splendid Counselors down, you would take up this flood of sympathy to drive this trouble from our hands. We do feel to express thanks to you today.

#### LITTLE CHANGE IN HUMAN NATURE

I think it is just good sense that I should say very little on this occasion. I have been impressed with one thing particularly in this Conference and it is that we are emphasizing fundamentals. In a sense, I would not like to be considered old-fashioned, but remember there is nothing quite so important, quite so full of gold as real fundamentals. Your Ford has changed its model; your airplane has decidedly changed; steam