

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

In the spread and perpetuation of the Christian principles that found expression in this cherished government of ours, the Church played the principal role. It has a great stake in freedom. It must be equally zealous to preserve and maintain it. It is its duty whenever that is threatened, either by direct assault or the insidious undermining of the principles on which it rests, to raise its voice in warning and in protest and to throw its whole influence into the scales to preserve that freedom under which men may live and grow toward the ideals taught by the Master.

May God speed the day of this happy consummation, I pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

*Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

Several months ago I stood at President Grant's bedside when he lay in the hospital in Los Angeles. When I think how far he has come since that time on the road to recovery, I am deeply grateful at this moment to be able to announce that he is here, and will give us instructions and blessings at the conclusion of this great Conference.

## PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

I would like to talk about forty minutes—I see there are only ten.

I am very grateful indeed to my Heavenly Father that instead of not being able to move a finger or an arm or my left leg, and being unable to see straight out of my left eye, that instead of my mouth being all puckered up in a corner, I am looking natural and feeling natural, and I expect that I feel a whole lot better than I really am.

I was requested to speak only twenty minutes at the opening session of this Conference, and I spoke forty; and then last night I spoke forty-seven minutes—so that I have been overdoing what was considered to be wise.

## ENDORSEMENT OF PRECEDING SPEAKERS

I have thoroughly enjoyed the Conference. I listened to some of it at home, of course, over the radio. I endorse with all my heart everything said by the second counselor to the Presiding Bishop, and I endorse what Brother Merrill has said here today, and what our last speaker, Brother Bowen, has said. I noticed that Brother Bowen laid down several sheets of paper and did not read what was on them. I hope that when he turns in his manuscript for publication he will put it all in, because I endorse everything that he said and I endorse what he was going to say, without knowing what it was. (*Laughter*)

## DECRIES CONDITIONS IN AMERICA

I am sure we all love America. I am sure there are no more patriotic people on the face of the earth than the Latter-day Saints; in fact,

our belief is that the men who established this country were blessed of God, that they were inspired of God, and as we depart from those things we are not doing that which is pleasing to our Heavenly Father. I think that without doubt we are getting just about as far away as we can at the present time—shall I say, politically. I do not care how you put it. We are starting on the broad path that leads to destruction, and had we stayed in the straight and narrow path we would not need to be arranging to be in a war. The Lord points out the way, and if we walk in it all will be well.

Many of the Latter-day Saints have surrendered their independence; they have surrendered their free thought, politically, and we have got to get back to where we are not surrendering the right. We must stay with the right and if we do so God will bless us.

#### ADVICE TO LATTER-DAY SAINT BOYS IN THE ARMY

I understand there are a lot of our boys here today that are in the army. I hope and pray and plead that every boy will feel in his heart: "I want to know what is right and clean and pure and holy, and I want God to help me." I want every Latter-day Saint soldier to get down on his knees and pray God to help him to lead a clean life, and to preach the Gospel while he is in the army. The army, as a rule, is a demoralizer of the morals of men, to a very great extent. They think: "Oh, well; we are going to be killed anyway—let's have a h—l of a good time." Do not wish for any such *good* time; there is no good time anywhere for any human being except by doing good and doing right. There is a peace, a joy, and a happiness that come from doing the right that nothing else can compare with. There are no people in all the world that are as happy and as contented as the true Latter-day Saints, and there are no people that are much more miserable than those that finally apostatize. I have met them and I have not forgotten when one man laughed at me because I believed firmly in the Church, and its principles and doctrines. He said that anyone who believed in such things lacked intelligence. This man was an apostate. I was able even as a boy to say to him:

The life of the apostate is a greater testimony to me than anything else of the divinity of the work in which I am engaged, except the teaching of my beloved mother. I have seen good men change and become bad men and then apostatize, but I have never known a good man, a tithepayer, an observer of the Word of Wisdom, to ever apostatize. I have found men lying against the Church after they apostatized.

#### AN UNFRIENDLY NEWSPAPER

The gentleman said:

Do you mean to call me a liar?

I said:

No, I do not want to call you a liar; that would not be gentlemanly. But what is the difference between lying yourself and hiring somebody else to lie?

None.

I said:

There is a newspaper today, in this town, that was foreordained figuratively before it was born, to lie about the Mormons and it is fulfilling its foreordination. I am working in a bank and I see the list of patriotic apostates and anti-Mormons who put up the money to keep it alive, and your name was among them.

He said:

The paper does not lie.

I said:

My friend, I will make you acknowledge it lies, if you dare to challenge me.

I challenge you.

All right, I said, I went to a meeting in what is called the Liberal Institute. It ought to have been called Headquarters for lying about the Mormons, instead of Liberal Institute. You sat on the stand within ten feet of the speaker, and I sat on the front row within ten feet of the speaker. Now, I will tell you everything that happened in that meeting, which you heard and I heard, now I will tell you what was published, and now I will tell you that every word of it was a lie, and if you say it was not a lie you are a liar.

He said:

The paper lied that time.

I am going to take as long as I want, you know, and if anybody gets tired and wants to go out he or she has my permission. Being an insurance agent I am not easily offended. (*Laughter*)

The fact remains, my brethren and sisters, that we have had a glorious Conference, and I wish that I could have been here at all of the meetings, but wisdom suggested that I do not come. I think that probably I spoke too much last night, but everything I said I meant, and I do not take back a word that I said.

#### THE GOOD OF THE PEOPLE UPPERMOST DESIRE

People have come into my office and complained about editorials that were in the Church newspaper, and I have endorsed those editorials with all my heart, and I do not give the snap of my finger for the opinion of those who did not endorse them. I simply feel that they were for the best good of the people. I have no other desire, I have never had, and I never will, other than to try to find out what is for their best good.

I heard that one of the men sitting on this stand today was twitted—it may not be true—that he had surrendered his manhood and voted the way the Presidency of the Church wanted him to vote. He had voted the opposite ticket from what he was expected to vote. I heard that this good brother who sits here said, "The Presidency did not tell me how to vote." I heard that he got down on his knees and prayed to the Lord to help him to know how to vote, and he voted contrary to the way he had originally intended to vote. I wish more people would get down on

their knees, and perhaps they would vote differently—that is my belief. He said to this man :

Don't go away with any idea that if the Presidency ever did ask me to vote a certain way that that is not the way I would vote. It is the way I will vote.

#### REFUSAL TO BECOME FIRST GOVERNOR

Now, brethren, I have said it here, and I will say again, that as a youngster I never wanted anything more than I wanted to be the first Governor of the State of Utah. I received a telegram saying :

Sixty per cent of the convention in Ogden has agreed to vote for you on the first ballot, you are sure to be nominated. We believe it will be unanimous before we get through voting.

I read the telegram to Heber M. Wells, my brother-in-law, who had been nominated for the position on the Republican ticket. He said :

Well, Heber, all that I have I owe to you. You took my note for an interest in your business, and the dividends paid the note; and I sold my interest and got a home to start with. When I was defeated the first time I ever ran for office you went around with a list headed by this statement: We subscribe for stock in the State Bank, Heber J. Grant to be President, and Heber M. Wells, Cashier, and as a result you gave me twice as good a job as I had in the City Hall. If you want to be the Governor I will resign although it will almost damn me with my party, and I will campaign for you.

I thanked him. I said :

I will let you know in an hour—maybe less.

I walked to the office of the President of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, a man nearly ninety years of age, and I handed him the telegram and I said :

President Woodruff, please tell me how to answer it.

Those of you that knew Brother Woodruff know that he was a terror to nearly all shorthand clerks—he talked so fast. And he talked just as fast as I ever heard him when he said to me :

What are you coming to me for? Why don't you answer your own telegrams? Haven't you, an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, sufficient wisdom to answer a telegram without bothering me?

I said :

Thank you, Brother Woodruff; thank you. Had you thought that I could do any good as the Governor of the State—that young man as I am I could do any good for the people, you would have said, Heber, the Lord bless you. I hope you will be elected. I shall send a telegram that it will be a personal favor to me if my name never comes before the convention.

Ah, that is good, that is good, that is good.

And that is the telegram I sent; and today I thank the Lord from the bottom of my heart that I did not become the Governor, because I

had never studied along that line; I was not qualified for the job, and I would not have made one-half as good a Governor as Governor Wells did, because he had a patriot, he had a diplomat, he had a great statesman as a father, one of the greatest. I understand that Brigham Young said:

Daniel Wells is my statesman, Heber Kimball is my prophet, and I am a business man looking after the best interests of the people.

Jesse N. Smith, according to Joseph F. Smith one of the best read and the best informed man in the Church, said to me that in his judgment there were two great, wonderful, outstanding men, politically, in the United States, and they were Daniel H. Wells and Abraham Lincoln, and in his judgment Daniel was the greater of the two.

So, I say, Heber was educated along the proper lines for that work, and he was a very good Governor. I had made money, and plenty of it, and Heber had not, and I would not have made as good a Governor and it would have been a mistake for me to have been elected. But I wanted it all right to start with.

I know as I know that I live that this Gospel is true, and I know that what Joseph F. Smith said to me—the last words that he uttered—is true: “The Lord makes no mistake. The Lord bless you, my boy!” The Lord has made no mistake, although I say it myself, because I have given my life, the best of it, to this Church, and shall do so as long as I live.

#### GOD'S GUIDANCE GIVEN TO THOSE WHO SEEK IT

Now, brethren, get down on your knees and pray to God to guide you in all you do. Do you think that there are a lot of people holding the highest offices in the Government of the United States that are praying for guidance, men who voted for the repeal of the liquor law? Do you mean that the men who drink their cocktails right along—and we are spending billions of dollars for whiskey—and some of them are now in high places—that those are the men whom God is directing? If you do, I do not. I tell you that no greater crime was ever committed than the repealing of the Prohibition law. Billions of dollars squandered, and poverty, and heartaches, and death and damnation to many men, have come because of liquor.

Now, I pray the Lord to bless our boys. I give them my blessing, and I have the right to bless them, and I promise them that if they will be prayerful God will give them joy even in the army, if they will live sweet and clean lives. I do hope and pray that they will be like the Lamanites who were converted and who when they went into war none of them lost their lives. A marvelous story that you will find in the Book of Mormon.

I pray the Lord to sanctify all that has been said here, from the start of this Conference to the close. I thank Him for the ease, the perfect ease, that I had in talking last night for forty-seven minutes. I want to say that I love the Latter-day Saints, and I love the word of God; and I want you to know that I thank God that the Gospel is one of forgiveness.

## A STORY REGARDING FORGIVENESS

I shall tell you one incident in my life.

A man was cut off the Church for adultery, and asked to be restored. President John Taylor wrote a letter to the brethren that had taken action against the man, in which he said: "I want every man to vote his own convictions, and not to vote to make it unanimous unless it is unanimous."

When the matter was presented and voted upon, the vote stood half for and half against restoration.

Later he came up again, and a majority were in favor of his being baptized.

Finally, all of the men that were at the trial, except one, voted to let him be baptized. President John Taylor sent for me and told me I was the only man that stood in the way of this man's being baptized, and he said:

How will you feel when you meet the Lord, if this man is permitted to come up and say he repented although his sins were as scarlet, and you refused to let him be baptized?

## HEEDS SACRED BOOK

I said:

I will look the Lord squarely in the eye, and I will tell Him that any man that can destroy the virtue of a girl and then lie and claim that she was maligning him and blackmailing him, will never get back into this Church with my vote. You said in your letter to vote our convictions, and I will vote them and stay with them unless you want me to change.

He said:

Stay with your convictions, my boy.

I walked to my home, only one block away. I picked up the Doctrine and Covenants. I was reading it prayerfully and humbly, and marking passages. Instead of its opening at the bookmark, it opened at the passage:

Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

I the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.

I shut up the book and rushed back to the President, and I said, "I give my consent."

Brother Taylor had a habit, when something pleased him, of shaking himself and laughing. He shook himself and laughed, and said: "My gracious, Heber, this is remarkable; what has happened?" And I told him. He said: "Heber, when you left here a few minutes ago did you not think: what if he had defiled my wife or daughter? And when you thought that did you not feel as if you would like to just knock the life out of that man?"

I said, "I certainly did."

"How do you feel now?"

"Well, really and truly Brother Taylor, I hope the poor old sinner can be forgiven."

"You feel a whole lot better, don't you?"

I said, "I certainly do."

He added: "I put that clause in that letter for you and my son. You have learned a lesson as a young man. You have learned a good lesson, that this Gospel is one of forgiveness of sin, of awful sin, if there is true repentance, and it brings peace into your heart when you forgive the sinner. It brings peace when you love the man that you hated, provided the man turns to doing right. You have learned a lesson in your youth. Never forget it." And I never have.

#### A CLOSING BLESSING

But there is one thing that is necessary—and I warn you all—and that is this: "By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them." If he has not truly repented President Taylor said his being baptized will do him no good.

Now, I pray the Lord to bless the Latter-day Saints. I pray the Lord to bless the people of the world. I pray with all my heart and soul that any man—I do not care who he is or how high his position,—that is doing anything to get us into war, that he may be confounded; and I pray that we will all pray for guidance with all our hearts and souls. I feel as though it might be well for the Latter-day Saints to set aside a day to pray and to fast and to ask the Lord to preserve us as a nation from getting into a war.

God bless you, one and all, and every honest soul—and every wicked soul that repents—I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

#### PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

##### *Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

Daily the Latter-day Saints pray that the Lord will bless and inspire and preserve the President of the Church. In the future when we thus pray let us also ask Him for power to follow President Grant's righteous life, for I testify to you that he is a righteous man and sets a worthy example to all Israel. Let us ask also that we might have power and ability to do what he has asked us to perform as officers and members of the Church. We will associate with our prayer that God will bless him, these two petitions—first, that we may be righteous as he in our daily lives, in our dealings with our fellowmen; secondly, that we might have increased power to perform our duties in the Church. Then I am sure that the spirit of this great Conference will be carried to our homes and will abide in our hearts and the prayer we offer for President Grant's preservation will be answered in blessings upon our own heads.

I am sure you would have me express at this time appreciation of