

Saturday, April 4

death; for in this world your joy is not full, but in me your joy is full." (D. & C. 101:36)

In this world upheaval, in this day of wanton destruction, we, as a people must look upward. There must be trust and faith in our hearts. Hope must walk by our side. We must remember charity also. We must treasure the warm words of the Father to His Church, "Be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you." (D. & C. 68:6) We who have been called to leadership in the Church of Christ must lead our people from anxiety and fear and doubt, to trust and faith in the Lord, and certainty in the outcome of the Lord's plan of salvation. We must repeat with gladness the words of the Lord, "Fear not, let your hearts be comforted; yea, rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks." (D. & C. 98:1)

Above the roar of cannon and airplane, the maneuvers and plans of men, the Lord always determines the tide of battle. So far and no farther does He permit the evil one to go in his career to create human misery.

First Day

The Lord is ever victorious; He is the Master to whose will Satan is subject. Though all hell may rage, and men may follow evil, the purposes of the Lord will not fail. The God of Israel, "He slumbers not nor sleeps." It is well to remember the admonition of old: "Be still and know that I am God."

It is our destiny as a people to purify the world; to lead men from evil to good; to win the nations to the realm of everlasting truth; to prepare the earth for the coming of the Lord. We are called to establish the kingdom of God on earth. If we accept our mission with faith and the courage born of faith, the Lord will make us victorious in our labors in his cause. Happiness will wait upon us. The protection of heaven will be about us. At this time in our history, let us teach as never before. "If ye are prepared, ye shall not fear."

May the Lord qualify us for the heavy duties of this day I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS

Presiding Bishop of the Church

BRETHREN: It is a great privilege to associate with you in the leadership of the Church, and I feel very grateful for the kindness that has been extended to me, as I have had the privilege of visiting in your various stakes. It seems that the Church is dearer as we become better acquainted with the men upon whom such responsibility rests.

The Church has always placed a high value upon leadership, righteous leadership. When the Lord was talking to Abraham, He told him of the spirits He had created, and He stood in the midst of them, and He said: "These I will make my rulers upon the earth." Then He said to Abraham,

"Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born."

It seems to me that probably there has never been a time in the history of the world when there were as many of those spirits among whom the Father stood as there are upon the earth at the present time. Now, perchance, if we are among those spirits of whom the Father spoke, then great responsibility rests upon our shoulders. It is not enough to be called, to be given talents, to be given an opportunity, but the Master indicated that those who are faithful and true to the talents that were placed in their hands, they it was who should receive His blessing. He said unto them: "Well done, thou good and

faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

So if we expect to continue our positions of leadership it will be because we are faithful over the few things that the Lord has entrusted into our care.

Now we feel very grateful to the members of the stake presidencies and bishoprics throughout the Church for the fine support we have had in the Aaronic Priesthood work in the past three years since we came into office. I would like to call your attention to the fact that in 1939 we had two hundred fifty-eight standard quorum awards in the quorums of the Aaronic Priesthood. In 1940 we had five hundred four, or an increase of ninety-five percent. In 1941 we had nine hundred twelve, and requests are still coming in, which is an additional increase of eighty-one percent over the ninety-five percent of the year before. Now for 1942, according to the promises we are receiving as we go about in the stakes of Zion, we ought to have nearly two thousand.

If it were only reports, brethren, that we were working for, that would not be so much, but when these standard quorum awards are interpreted in terms of the influence they have upon the lives of the Aaronic Priesthood of the Church, it tells quite a remarkable story.

I have some other statistics that may interest you: The three highest stakes in the Church show an average attendance last year of sixty-five percent of their boys—that is an average attendance! The three lowest stakes have an average of nineteen percent—nineteen percent against sixty-five percent. I want you to think about that for a few minutes. I wonder if it is the fault of the boys; I wonder if it is the fault of the Church; I wonder if the Priesthood is any different in these other stakes. In some stakes we find one bishop who is outstanding, and qualifies every quorum in his ward, and then we turn to the other wards, and there are no standard quorum awards there. We had in our office yesterday a chairman of the

Aaronic Priesthood in one of the stakes of Zion where every quorum earned a standard quorum award for 1941. I congratulated him, and said: "How do you do it?" He said: "We have an up-and-coming stake presidency, and when we have that, it is easy to do the job." He said: "We tear the *Progress of the Church* apart and we mimeograph it and send it out to our wards." It was not hard to determine why all the quorums of that stake were standard award quorums, they had "an up-and-coming stake presidency." We have "up-and-coming" bishops in some wards that in the midst of no awards they are able to furnish them.

I would like to give you some statistics here on what standard quorum awards have really done. This is a percentage of the two highest stakes in the Church where each quorum has earned a standard quorum award, and the two lowest where they have no standard quorum awards:

Attendance at quorum meetings for the highest was an average of sixty-six percent; the lowest twenty-eight percent.

This is the average observing the Word of Wisdom; ninety-four percent as against eighty-five percent.

We are very happy that the Word of Wisdom is being that well observed, regardless of the standard quorum awards.

The payment of tithing in the highest stakes, seventy-five percent; in the lowest stakes, thirty-eight percent.

The percent of Adult Aaronic Priesthood in these stakes, in the highest, forty-two percent; in the lowest seventy-five percent.

So you see it tells its own story. Where there are no standard quorum awards, where the work is not being done among the Aaronic Priesthood, they are moving into what we call the Adult Aaronic Priesthood group.

BRETHREN, I believe it is a fine thing to be in positions of responsibility in the Church, but the Lord expects more of us than to be good men. I think that comes first, but He wants us to be active men.

There is one stake of Zion in this Church in which I have been very much interested for many years. I have

Saturday, April 4

watched its progress, and I have kept track of its record on the bulletin. Three years ago there was a change made in the stake presidency. The man who was released is a fine Latter-day Saint, a real man, but he did not seem to have the vision of things, and according to the report in the last three years, since the change, that stake has increased its record sixty-six percent in all items, total and average, that are shown in the bulletin. Now that shows leadership. When that stake presidency was appointed, they came in and said: "Bishop, have you any suggestions to make?"

I said: "I would have at least one. I would go out and inventory every man and woman in that stake of Zion who have leadership ability, no matter where they are serving. It is my observation as I travel in the Church that we have many fine men, capable men, who are not active in the Church, hundreds and possibly thousands of men who have had training in the mission field, and they come home and we lose their services, but they may be engaged in other activities."

According to the newspaper accounts, all that was being accomplished, from month to month in the community was being done by the service clubs—Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Exchange Club, Lion's Club, etc., on down the line—the Daughters of the Pioneers, the Mothers of the Democrats, the Mothers of the Republicans, etc.; so I said to the president of the stake: "Sometimes I wonder where the kingdom of God

First Day

is in this stake of Zion. I never felt more than I do today the meaning of the words of the Master when He said: 'Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up,' and I believe that with all my heart." I have nothing against these other organizations, but I believe that men in Israel owe their first allegiance to the Church and kingdom of God, and I want to admonish you brethren to put your arms around men and put them to work, and when they are released from positions, do not feel that there is no place for them.

I had a letter from a bishop the other day and he said: "Since they released me I have taken over the Adult Aaronic Priesthood in the ward. We have forty-two enrolled and we are having an average attendance of fifteen to twenty-five in my home every Monday night." There is work for everybody if we are going to discharge the responsibilities that are ours in this great day of the fulness of times.

As I close my remarks, I refer you to the words of Nephi when he saw the coming forth of the gospel in our day, and he said: Blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion in that day, for they shall be lifted up and be filled with the Holy Ghost and be exalted in the everlasting kingdom of my Father. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that publish glad tidings! (1 Nephi 13:37)

God help us to see our responsibilities and to do them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren: We are one day short in our full Conference time. I want to run over a little now, and we will probably have to run over a little tonight. I am going to ask Brother Sonne to take enough time to bear his testimony. He has recovered, apparently fully, from a very serious operation and likewise from a serious sorrow. So we will take enough time now to hear Brother Sonne bear his testimony.