

**ELDER RUFUS K. HARDY***Of the First Council of the Seventy*

**T**O you, my beloved brethren, to you who have been chosen, selected, and invited to attend this great conference, I extend my love, and also my great admiration for that which is going on in this Church. All my life, as I feel that also all your lives, you have seen the hand of God in its operation. And yet, for the moment or two that I have to stand here, I would like to say something that might make us feel just a little bit more of an urge to do that which we know should be done.

This great gathering blessed with the choicest diadem of God, His Priesthood, is for what? Surely we all can answer; it is for but one purpose, and that purpose is to bring to pass the salvation of the souls of men, and is so declared by the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." No more plainly stated is this, than that which is declared in the first chapter of Genesis in our holy sacred history, the Bible. You will recall that God, after having formed this earth—after having created this great universe—after all things, both animal and vegetable had been made by Him, and in the great firmament above that He had placed great lights, the sun, the moon, and the twinkling stars, those heavenly traffic signals that we should obey, for they turn the days into weeks and the weeks into months, and the months into years—then God did something which to me is one of the most marvelous things that I have read about. God spoke to His companions and said, "Let us make man in our

image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

And then the thing which was performed which brings us nearer to God than anything that I can imagine, was this: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

That which God has made He desired protected and kept. Even so every declaration that we have in our sacred history handed down to us by tradition bears this same record and this same declaration: preserve and keep and save the souls of men.

And, so, especially to our seventies, especially to these men upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility directly from God of teaching and preaching this gospel abroad and at home, I would say remember that which is choicest of all things in God's heart is the souls of men, and preserve them and keep them.

I am grateful for my associations—thankful to God for the opportunity I have had of being associated with these fine men who stand at the head of this Church, and I trust and pray that I may always be worthy—that I may do that which will bring to pass that which God would like accomplished and that we all, you fine presidents of stakes, presidents of quorums, bishops of wards, together, may bend our efforts to bring to pass God's wish that the souls of men may be saved in His kingdom, I ask, in Jesus' name. Amen.

**BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS***Presiding Bishop of the Church*

**W**ITH all my heart, brethren, I appreciate the opportunity of being here today, feasting on the spiritual food that we have been receiving from our leaders and associates. I thank the Lord that there never has

been a time in my life that a shadow of a doubt has crossed my mind as to the divinity of this work and the divine calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith and those who have succeeded him in the Presidency of this Church. I thrilled