

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

TO 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*

WITH 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

today with President Grant's testimony, as it was read to us by President McKay, and I was delighted with the message of the First Presidency delivered to us this morning by President Clark. Of all the leadership in the world today, surely there is none comparable to that which we have in the Church. How safe and secure we should feel in following their precepts and their example.

A few days ago I received a letter from a man in the East with whom I have had some correspondence—a prominent business man, but not a member of our Church. I forwarded him some of our literature. He and his wife have read the Book of Mormon three times. He has just read the Articles of Faith and writes a beautiful appreciation for the truths contained therein. But I would like to read from his letter his comment after having read the message of the First Presidency delivered at the April conference. He says: "The message of the First Presidency was read with intense interest. It portrays the mind of a soul deeply interested in the welfare of a higher civilization, with a clear understanding of 'mercy and justice.'" It is good to know that thinking men, though not of us, recognize the power of leadership of those whom the Lord has placed to guide His people in these days.

WE have a great responsibility, those of us who are here today. For we represent the leadership of this Church—the General Authorities and those who preside in the stakes, the wards, and the Priesthood quorums of the Church. We have problems and responsibilities and opportunities probably such as we have never had before, particularly in these defense areas. I hope we will realize that there will be more expected of us—that our arms will be just a little longer, and our love a little deeper, and our faith a little more sincere, and that our confidence and trust in God and the ultimate triumph of His work in the earth may never falter.

I hope the bishops will realize that they are in very deed fathers of the

people, all who live within the confines of their wards whether their names be on their records or not. Many have come from outside places and they need care and attention. I hope the bishops will also sense their great responsibility as presidents of the Aaronic Priesthood in their wards—that the ward teachers will realize that their responsibility is greater than ever before, that the presidencies of Priesthood quorums and all charged with responsibility in this Church will respond thereto as never before. And I wouldn't like to overlook the seventies, for I feel with Brother Kirkham the great importance of missionary work, for the Lord has decreed that the gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, even to every creature. I feel that there are added opportunities within our reach today, and I hope that we will meet these responsibilities in such a way that whoever comes into our communities need never go away and say that he was not given an opportunity to hear the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ from the elders of this Church.

I would like to leave one other thought with you before closing. It has been said that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Probably it was because Paul never had any children of his own that he wasn't afraid to tell the bishops and deacons that they should be able to rule well their own houses, for said he: "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God." Some of us may not have dared say such a thing, but I believe that under present conditions we should give more thought to this, each one of us individually, than we have ever done before.

WE listened to President Clawson a few minutes ago reading the words of Alma. It has always occurred to me that that great mission of Alma, the son, was the result of the faith and the prayers of Alma, his father, who pleaded with the Lord until the Lord saw fit to call him back from the error of his ways. I wonder if we are doing that for our

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boys and girls. I wonder if we are holding council meetings as husbands and wives, and fathers and mothers, to try to meet the new conditions and temptations that are in our midst. I wonder if we know each one of our children well enough to know that they are making their contribution to the building up of the kingdom of God in the earth. Are our children setting an example because of our power as leaders and priests in our own homes?

A few days ago, I received a letter from one of our boys in the service, and I commend the counsel given in this conference, that we write them. He said he had just been ordained an elder in the Church, and he thanked the Lord for that more than for any other thing. While he has been in the service he has changed his way of living so that he is setting an example in upholding the standards of this Church.

But how did he get started in the way of righteousness? His grandmother in one of our stakes was concerned about him, because his mother was dead. She

wrote a letter and asked if we would write to this boy. We finally located him, and the first letter we received told how he was in California and heard two missionaries speaking on the street corner and lady missionaries singing; and he said he wouldn't have gone and spoken to them for anything in the world. He was afraid. He drew a diagram showing how he went down to the corner and back again, and then down to the corner and back again, and finally he found himself standing talking to the missionaries. In his letter he asked: "Do you think the Lord had anything to do with this?" As far as I am concerned I think the prayers of that grandmother and the importunities probably of his mother who had gone beyond, were the means of bringing that boy back into line of duty and righteousness.

God help us to labor with our children, to pray with them, to see that our own are setting an example in the Church. It will do more than all the preaching we can do. God help us to do it, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Elder Harold H. Bennett sang a solo, "The Seer." (Words by President John Taylor).

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I was deeply touched by the address of President Grant, which was read by President McKay this morning. On the day that President Grant was chosen as one of the Twelve Apostles by a revelation of the Lord to President John Taylor, my father was also called and ordained a member of the First Council of the Seventy. He succeeded his father, President Joseph Young, who was ordained to his position by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple in February, 1835. My grandfather and my father both had deep and abiding testimonies of the divinity of the gospel of Jesus Christ as it was restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith. I am grateful to the Lord for the same testimony, for I know that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world,

and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, for he spoke for God and was sharer of God's counsels. He was the bearer and preacher of God's Word, and opened one of the greatest stages of religion in the history of mankind.

My brethren of the seventies, we are awakened to the great responsibilities of teaching the gospel to all mankind. If ever the world needed the Word of God, it is today. For this reason we must have vision, which gives us a view of the future as well as insight into conditions of the present. The calling of the seventy is an ideal of fellowship, with sacred obligations to God. Our spiritual obligations must make for unity and concord, and promote a spiritual culture within our ranks, which will give us power to teach the Word. From