

the Church, the Assistants to the Twelve, members of the First Council of Seventy and the Presiding Bishopric.

Elder Richard P. Condie will direct the music this afternoon, and Elder Wade N. Stephens is at the organ.

The opening song, "Come, O Thou King of Kings," will be sung by the congregation. Song Folder, number 12, hymn book, number 209.

The congregation sang "Come O Thou King of Kings," (Words by Parley P. Pratt).

Elder H. Roland Tietjen, President of the South Sevier Stake, offered the opening prayer.

The congregation sang "Come Let Us Anew," (Wesley's collection).

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I have enjoyed with you, my brethren, the spirit and instructions of this conference, and while I have been sitting upon the stand and realizing that I would be called at some session of the conference to speak, my mind has entertained a variety of thoughts and I wonder if I can bring to your mind some of these reflections in a way that will be appreciated and worthwhile.

I see in this large body of men a representation of the Priesthood and ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I realize, to some extent at least, what the responsibility of holding the Priesthood and being a minister of the Lord means.

SACRED COVENANTS

When we embraced the gospel by baptism, by that act we covenanted that we would keep the commandments of God. When we received the Priesthood, by that act we covenanted to magnify that Priesthood, and when we received these various positions which grow out of the Priesthood, and which we as a part of the ministry have received, it has been usually with a promise on our part that we will magnify that calling to the best of our ability. That comes in the nature of a solemn covenant made before the Lord and His servants and should not be regarded lightly on our part.

THE COUNCIL IN HEAVEN

I congratulate you and myself, brethren, on being engaged in the work of the Lord—the greatest and grandest and most glorious work in which man, angels, or Gods can be engaged. All that we know, all that we have heard that has come from our Father in heaven and from His Son Jesus Christ, pertains to the salvation of the souls of men. As the

Father walked and talked with His servant Moses, He explained to Moses, “. . . behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Accordingly a council was called in heaven where the plan of man’s salvation was considered, and Jesus, the First-born of the Father in the spirit, came forward with a proposal to do the will of the Father. Said He: “. . . Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). He was chosen as the Savior of the world and by Him, under the Father, the world was created and made and all things therein. We sanctioned the plan of salvation and our resolves without a doubt were that we would abide by that plan in all particulars, that in the end we might be like our Father and dwell with Him in His kingdom; and the morning stars sang, and we, the sons of God, shouted for joy in this great plan, all looking toward the saving of the souls of our Father’s children—all of us, for the Prophet Joseph tells us that we were all there in the Council of Heaven, that we saw the Savior chosen and appointed and the plan of salvation made, and we sanctioned it. Then it is not going too far, I think, to say that this is the noblest work in which even the Gods can be engaged. And what an honor it is, and we should so regard it, to be privileged to work with the Father and for the Father in the accomplishing of His purposes, looking to the saving of souls. I wonder if we fully appreciate this honor.

EFFECTS OF WAR UPON THE CHURCH

We are living in perilous times. Many of the Latter-day Saints are troubled in their minds, have great anxiety because of the war and because their loved ones—husbands, brothers, and sons—must of necessity engage in the war, many of whose lives have been lost and others are in jeopardy and in danger. We regard the cause as a just one. This country was given to us of the Lord. The constitution and laws of the country were given to us of the Lord. Our liberty and our freedom came from the Lord, and, where it is necessary, we must fight to maintain that freedom, and liberty, and peace. It is only reasonable to believe that the Lord intends that these things be preserved unto us, if only we will be worthy and keep His commandments. But there is trouble just the same, troubled hearts and minds, and the war has not only affected the individual members of the Church along with other people of the world to their sorrow, but also the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints feels its effects. We can see its baneful effects in all the organizations of the Church. As we move among you brethren in the stakes of Zion attending the conferences, we note how the quorums of the Priesthood are disrupted, officers and members alike called into the service of their government, and the work is greatly hampered. Because of the rationing of rubber and of gas for our motor cars, the auxiliary associations of the young men and the young women do not have the attention which they heretofore had. The leading officers are not able to visit and associate with them and encourage and help them along as formerly.

I receive each month a report from the various temples of the work being done. Since the beginning of the war there has been a tremendous

falling off in the amount of temple work done in all the temples of the Church—a lamentable condition.

We receive a monthly report through the First Council of the Seventy of the missionary work in the stakes of Zion, and we observe that there has been a great falling off of accomplishment in that work.

Our elders are returning from the mission field in large numbers, but very few going into the field to replace them, and we wonder what the results are going to be. I wonder, brethren, if we are doing all we can to improve this condition in the Church.

SUGGESTION FOR CARRYING ON MISSIONARY WORK

I had the pleasure this last week of interviewing a returned missionary whom I set apart six months ago to go into the mission field for a short-term mission. He is seventy-three years of age, and this was the eighth mission for him. Every winter for eight years he has spent about six months in the mission field. He is not a wealthy man, he has no farm to return to, he has no business, but he informed me that he has an invitation from the mission president to return next winter; and he intends so to do if in the meantime he can earn enough money for his keep in the mission.

I am wondering, brethren, if in your quorums of the Priesthood, if in the stakes and wards of Zion, and possibly in the mission fields, there are not a number of men who are not needed in the service of their country, and women also, who could go upon missions for short terms. These will usually be men and women of experience, and I think we could get a number of them if we would like, and I feel we would have a forceful corps of missionaries in the missions of the United States if we were to adopt more fully this plan. I remember a number of years ago when the President of the Church called upon the people for volunteers for this kind of work. One of my sons who had ten or fifteen men working for him in his business, volunteered his services and turned his business over to one of his employees and went out into the mission field for six months and performed yeoman service, and at that time I think there were quite a number who responded to the call. I have not heard that the President of the Church has withdrawn the invitation to members of the Church to engage in that kind of service.

LOCAL MISSIONARY LABORS DURING WORLD WAR I

I had the honor during the World War of presiding over the European Mission. During that period missionaries had to come home. In the British Mission we were reduced at one time to seven missionaries from home. We found there women doing men's work as they are doing today, and we concluded that if they could do men's work outside of religious labor, they could do men's work as missionaries, and so we called women folk. We had as many as three hundred seventy-five lady missionaries laboring in Great Britain at one time, and we called young men, who were not old enough to bear arms, into the ministry with the promise that if they filled two years' mission faithfully and desired

to come to Zion, their fares would be paid the same as missionaries who came from Zion into the mission field. When I left that mission field, as I remember, we had twenty-three local men laboring, men of families, giving part-time service presiding over districts, and a wonderful work was accomplished. The tithing during nearly three years that I was in Britain nearly doubled itself, and the baptisms were almost as many as when we had seventy missionaries from Zion laboring in that country. While this was going on in Great Britain, a similar work was being done in Germany under the presidency of Angus J. Cannon, and in the Scandinavian countries under the presidency of Brother Christiansen. It can be done today, I think. I think Brother Clawson said on one occasion, speaking about the work that was done in those countries during the war, it was only because there was a war on, otherwise it could not have been accomplished. If that is the case, we have a war on now and the conditions are very similar, and I believe it can be worked out.

CONVERSIONS IN STAKES

Here at home in this stake missionary work I do not know whether these brethren are all aware that we have had more conversions in the stakes of Zion, according to our statistics, during the past few years than we have had in the mission field. There are people here to be converted, and it shows something of the activity of these stake missionaries.

I want to say that here in the Liberty Stake I have a daughter laboring as a stake missionary. She is 58 years of age, a grandmother, and her associate in that work is a lady almost as old. President Merz, the president of that mission, informs me that she is doing a good work. So why not have some of our elderly sisters called, who can be spared, and engage in this work? I think this is one way in which we can offset, perhaps, the disadvantages that come through this world war.

THE PURPOSES OF THE LORD TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

And now as a ministry are we doing our full duty—presidents of stakes, bishops of wards, quorums of Priesthood—are we seeing to it, as far as we have influence and authority, that those over whom we are presiding, are doing their duty? Brethren, I know that this work in which we are engaged is God's work. I am sure it will endure forever. No power can prevent its accomplishing its purpose, although it may be hindered temporarily. It is bound to succeed and truth is bound to triumph over error, and right over wrong. I know that God is at the helm, that He is our Eternal Father, that He loves us, that He desires our salvation, and He is glad to use us, weak though we are, in the accomplishment of that work.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

That no flesh should glory in his presence. (I Corinthians 1:26-29)

Weak as we are, with the help of the Lord we can accomplish His purposes. We can do nothing without His aid. He said to His disciples, "... Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). I do not know that we are any stronger as a ministry than were the disciples of Christ, who could do nothing without His help, but with His help mighty works may be accomplished. It is a great honor and blessing to us, I say, to receive this Priesthood and authority, and be privileged to work with the Lord for the blessing and salvation of mankind.

May the Lord help us that we may be untiring in our work, that we may not lie down on the job, but that we may be valiant in the covenants which we have made with Him in faithfulness, and earn for ourselves eternal life in His kingdom, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I have been delighted, my brethren, to be in attendance at this conference and to have been able to partake of the spirit of the occasion. We have been fed with the bread of life. I can see great strength and power growing in the Church with every conference that I attend and I notice also in the stakes of Zion, a marked improvement. Everywhere there seems to be more attention paid to the work of the Lord.

The attendance at stake conferences is not so large as I would like to see, but undoubtedly that will come back when travel restrictions are removed and the opportunity presents itself again for the people as a whole to attend these gatherings.

PRESIDENT GRANT'S SERMON INSPIRED

Yesterday there was added to the words and books of the prophets of the Lord another chapter in the great plan of God, when the sermon of President Grant, read by President David O. McKay, was delivered to this conference. That was one of the most outstanding evidences of spiritual strength that I have witnessed in a long time. I thought of President Grant who has worn his body out with hard work; and yet I think I have not read anything in the prophets that was more penetrating and more fully alive as to the obligations of the human family and the membership of the Church than that sermon. I am so glad that this and other inspired addresses are to be printed that we may be able to read them and pass them on to the world. There will come a time when they will be placed in books, and future generations will have them to read because they came from God. That sermon came from our Eternal Father, that is my witness unto you this afternoon.