

## ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH

*Patriarch to the Church*

Brethren: If one or two more whose names are Joseph F. are added to the list of General Authorities, general conference will make of me a total wreck. (Laughter)

As a boy I used to marvel when my father said that at the general conference he lost his appetite, and when he was called upon to speak, his arms, his elbows, and his hands went numb. I now look upon my father as a man of unusual fortitude. (Laughter) I have felt that I was in danger of imminent disintegration south of my Adam's apple.

I trust that the few moments that are mine shall not be spent in vain for you and that your faith will assist me to say one or two things which are of value.

## RESPONSIBILITY A SERIOUS MATTER

Six months ago in reporting the general conference, *Time* magazine, in its characteristic fashion, spoke of the Mormon Church, an organization of less than a million persons, as an organization which took itself very seriously as an international influence. The Salt Lake correspondent for *Time*, who I suppose wrote that article, wrote better than he knew, and I think that *Time* could immortalize itself no better than prophetically to hang upon the walls of its editorial offices those words in bronze.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does take itself seriously as an international power. The difficulty is that the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints do not take into sufficient consideration, the international importance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I submit to you that concentrated under this famous dome there is greater potentiality, were it worthily used, than is to be found in the combined military commands of the warring nations, and, as we have heard time and time again during this conference, that is a great responsibility.

We do not take the Church seriously enough. Yesterday as Brother Peterson, as I recall, former president of the Norwegian Mission, was speaking—I think it was he who told the tale of finding a Sunday School that had been disbanded because the bishopric had gone pheasant-hunting—this large body of Priesthood was moved to mirth. I personally can find no vestige of humor in the fact that men holding the Priesthood and with responsibility to a congregation should disband it in order to break the Sabbath.

We do not take the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints seriously enough. Here are gathered men who hold the Priesthood of Almighty God, and we have been told in no uncertain terms that where much is given much is expected and that we shall be held accountable if we fail to magnify the calling which is ours. It is essential that if we are to be intelligently obedient to the gospel, if we are intelligently to keep the covenants which every one of us has made, it is necessary for us to know what the gospel is and what those covenants entail, which

means that every one of us should be a student of the scriptures. Not only should he be a student of the scripture as that scripture is found recorded in Holy Writ, but he should be obedient to the scripture as it shall come from the constituted authority of the Church. Somehow it seems so easy to believe that the word of the Lord is printed in a book, but to some people it seems a little difficult when the word of the Lord comes from a living man.

#### THE WORD OF THE LORD GIVEN THROUGH THE HOLY GHOST

May I read just a word or two from a revelation that was given to Orson Hyde and some other missionaries:

And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. (D. & C. 68:4)

When Heber J. Grant, whom you have sustained, and I expect will again sustain before this conference is over, issues instruction as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, that word should be scripture to us. It is the word of the Lord Himself through His prophet, and it may be that sometimes that advice is not exactly in accordance with our personal desires. It has never been the business of a prophet of God to tell people what they wanted to hear; it is the business of a prophet, and I imagine it is a very unpleasant business sometimes, to tell the people what the Lord wants them to know and to do, and we who hold the Priesthood should take the Church seriously enough to be obedient to the scriptures.

#### SUGGESTIONS AS TO KINDNESS

I have been impressed with the times during this conference that the importance of kindness has been stressed, and I heartily concur in those sentiments. It is necessary, however, if we are to be truly kind, for us to be intelligent, for us to be understanding. We hear frequently that we must not drive young men out of the Church because they take up smoking, which is quite true. You will remember Bishop Ashton's remarks yesterday. I think we should go a little further, however, and in being kind to these individuals, make it clear to them that in every case at least fifty percent of the isolation which they feel, and oftener than that a larger percent, is due not to the Church but to the individual who is not conforming.

I had an interesting conversation with a man from Washington not long ago, and he said he did not go to church any more because he did not feel comfortable; they did not make him feel at home; they preached about the Word of Wisdom, and he felt isolated; he felt that he was not welcome, so he stayed away. He had taken up smoking. I asked him if anyone had specifically said that he was not welcome. "No, no, but they preach the Word of Wisdom."

I said "Well, will you have us stop preaching the Word of Wisdom because you have taken up smoking? Shall we not be faithful to the

revealed word of the Lord because you have seen fit not to follow that advice?"

Eventually he admitted that the reason he did not feel at home was not a cold shoulder had been turned to him, but because he knew in his own heart that he was doing what he ought not to do.

I think many times it would be kindness to help people understand their own reactions. It is so easy to do the other fellow's thinking for him; it is so easy for me to think because I am not doing what is right, the other fellow is trying to pass me up. The greatest kindness that this body of Priesthood, and the Priesthood wherever it may be, can give to the world is, first of all, courageously to set an unwavering example of righteousness; and second, to bear testimony to the truth. There is no greater kindness which this people can give to the world.

Brethren, we should take the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as an international power more seriously. I promise you that there shall be no solution to our various problems; we shall continue to see the wise men of the world confounded and their wisdom become foolishness, because they suppose they know of themselves; we shall see no solution to our problems until the world starts to accept the Christ in deed, not in lip service; and it is your responsibility and my responsibility as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to see that this word is spread by example as well as by precept.

God grant that we shall see our job, that we will not take our responsibility so lightly that we will look upon negligence as humor, but as tragic in these days, that this work may be the ultimate world leaven which it is destined to be, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## ELDER STEPHEN L RICHARDS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

We have surely been blessed, my brethren, with excellent counsel and inspiring messages in this conference. When I contemplate the fact that within this historic building we have met in peace, we have not been disturbed, we have been able to concentrate on the high purposes to which our lives are dedicated; while all about us is turmoil and confusion, I feel deeply grateful for the blessings which the Lord has brought to us.

### OUR DUTY TOWARDS THOSE ENGAGED IN PRESENT CONFLICT

I believe that our course is well charted for us. There need be no confusion about the direction we are to take, and the destination we are to achieve. We are set to maintain the kingdom of God in this world, and all of our energy and our effort is directed to that glorious purpose.

It is true that we find ourselves at this particular time confronted with a necessity which deserves and demands our immediate attention. Our country is engaged in a war. We are citizens. We have the job of winning that war. It has heretofore been pointed out how essential it is to the preservation of liberty in the earth that we accomplish this