

## BLESSINGS FOLLOW THE PAYMENT OF TITHING

Now, I would like to add a few thoughts on the practical phases of tithing. I want you to know that I believe the Lord has in mind to reward adequately every Latter-day Saint for his faithfulness. In the third chapter of Malachi the Lord promises to rebuke the devourer and open the windows of heaven. What a marvelous promise! Then in answer to their disputations He tells them He will prepare a book of remembrances and when He comes to claim His jewels "then shall ye return and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

When I was in a stake of Zion recently, a good brother asked me a question about paying tithing. He said, "I pay my tithing on that which I draw out of my business to live on. Is that right?" "Well," I said, as I am able to read between the lines, "I would imagine that you have accumulated an estate worth at least a hundred or a hundred fifty thousand dollars." He said, "You are right, Bishop." I said, "And that to date is untithed. If you were to die tonight, would you like to pass that estate on to your wife and children knowing that you had never tithed it?" He said, "I never thought of it quite that way before."

We have many inquiries at our office, constantly, about the matter of deducting taxes, income taxes, etc., before paying tithing, and we are told that in some cases the Saints are advised to do this, by their bishops. I think the bishops are being pretty liberal with the Lord's money. Taxes are no different from what they have always been except in amount and manner of payment. We have never expected to pay our taxes out of the Lord's tenth. That is what we are investing in the future security and freedom and liberty of the great nation in which we are privileged to live while our boys are out on the battlefield.

For some time I have felt that some farmers do not figure their tithing the way I think it should be figured. One good farmer said to me, "Bishop, I know just how to figure my tithing. I have a jar in my kitchen cabinet and every time I sell anything I put a tenth of it in the jar, then I pay it for tithing." I said, "Is that all you pay?" He said, "Yes, isn't that enough?" "Well," I said, "your brother who lives up here a few miles earns a hundred dollars a month and pays ten dollars tithing; he buys his groceries, his milk, his meat, and his eggs with the money he has left after paying his tithing. Should a farmer not figure his tithing on all he consumes and his surplus and the gain of his land?"

I pray God to bless you, brethren. I am proud of your faith. I think it is marvelous in the sight of the Lord, and I leave you my love and blessing and pray that the Lord will bless the good people over whom you preside, for their integrity, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS**

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

In following Bishop Richards, I feel very much like a still small voice. [Laughter.] Before the days of microphones and public address

systems, voices such as mine were not so easily heard by audiences such as this, and I am very grateful for the mechanical help that makes it possible for us to be heard by great numbers and in far places.

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE LEADING BRETHREN

I can think of no greater privilege in life, brethren, than to find fellowship with such men as you, and I can think of no greater tragedy or source of unhappiness than, having found such fellowship, to be deprived of it. I love my brethren; and I know that I could go to my brethren of the general authorities of the Church, to the last man, in any time of need, and find that I would not depart empty-handed or with empty heart. I hope that the time will come in every priesthood quorum of this Church when every member of every priesthood quorum can feel that same assurance concerning his own needs, spiritual and otherwise. It is a great source of strength and satisfaction and happiness, and assurance in life.

Before I proceed with one other thought that I have, I should like to express my personal regard for Brother Mark Petersen, who this day has been called to a place in the council of the twelve. It has been my privilege and my responsibility for some time to have business with him in the course of both of our official duties, and I have always found satisfaction in my approaches to him, and have always encountered there a quiet confidence and fairness, and safe judgment. And I subscribe to Brother Young's statement concerning him, pertaining to his gentlemanly characteristics on all occasions.

#### WAR MAKES NO CHANGE IN GOSPEL

There has been a thought running through my mind, one or two phases of which I should like to mention here today.

War, of necessity, changes many things. "Business as usual," is something that cannot be expected. Nor can we expect "life as usual." War may change, necessarily, many of the habits of our living, especially of a material nature.

But I should like to say this here today, with the best language that I can command: that war does not, and must not, and cannot, change fundamentals. For one thing, it does not change our obligation to be bearers of the message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brother George F. Richards has already referred to some phases of this, likewise his son, Bishop Richards, at this session.

If I am not mistaken, I think Brother Ivins of the First Council of the Seventy invited our attention some days ago to the fact that since the beginning of the stake missionary movement, within the past seven or eight years, more than 14,000 baptisms have resulted from stake missionary activity. To state it another way, that would add, perhaps, about three fairly good-sized stakes to the total membership of this Church—a tremendous accomplishment in the aggregate, and yet missionary opportunities are very perishable, so far as the individual is concerned.

I am reminded of the great hosts of men and women who have passed through our communities within the past two or three years, many of

whom have now left, and I am wondering with what impressions they have left, or if they have any impression of us at all. Some of them who were here last month are gone; some of them who were here last year are gone; some of them who are here now will be gone next month. Missionary opportunities on an individual basis are exceedingly perishable and transitory. War does not change our obligations to be bearers of the message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, wherever we are and under whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES CONCERNING OUR CHILDREN UNCHANGED

War does not change our obligations and responsibilities concerning our children; it cannot and it must not.

I am reminded of the fact that since the early crisis in the present European theatre of war, five or six years ago now, many young men and young women who were then twelve and fourteen and fifteen years of age, young men particularly, have since passed through perhaps the most critical years of their lives, and are now out fighting, flying bombers, in the armed forces of their respective countries, carrying the brunt, in many instances, of the heaviest battles. Should we have become too busy, because of the actual existence of war, or the imminence thereof, to have given these children of ours the foundation in our homes that we are obligated to give them and that they are entitled to have, thousands of them would now have left those homes without any foundation on which to place their feet.

I do not know how long the war will last, and I do not know anyone who does know. There are predictions extant, from a few weeks to several years. But regardless of its length, I do know that this is one of the responsibilities that war cannot and must not change—our responsibilities to our children—so that when the time comes that they must leave us, for any cause whatsoever, they will have that which will give them a fixed standard in life, a spiritual and moral foundation on which to rest their feet, no matter where they go or in what company they find themselves.

#### FUNDAMENTALS STILL IN FORCE

Another thing that war does not change is moral law, nor the evils and consequences that follow the disregarding of moral law. There is only one set of rules pertaining to the personal conduct of the children of our Father in heaven. If a thing was not right at home, it is not right away from home. If it was not right where we came from, it isn't right anywhere, in any company.

This spirit of social let-down and personal let-down is as wrong as it ever was or ever will be. War does not change fundamentals, nor the consequences that follow the ignoring of those fundamentals, and it must not be allowed to glorify evils. There is a reward for consistency of living, frequently restated by the prophets of God in a variety of language, over a wide period of time, but it resolves itself to the conclusion in the oft-quoted phrase: "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved."

May we be enabled as a people, and may our children, wherever they are, be enabled to distinguish between those things which war necessarily does not change, and those things which it must not be permitted to change, and to cleave to the fundamentals, both of personal and social conduct, as well as to all our other fixed obligations and duties as Latter-day Saints, and as children of God, our Father in heaven.

That we may have the spirit of discernment to distinguish between these things, and the strength, both those of us who are here and those who are on far fronts, the pattern of whose lives has been upset and broken, to carry forward and live lives of consistency, and endure to the end, is my prayer, to which I add my testimony of the truthfulness and divinity of this work, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

At the session of the conference this morning we were informed that the Church is out of debt, that it owes no man or any institution a dollar. For that I am grateful, as I know you are. But the Church is in debt—fortunately not financially, but it is in debt now, has always been in debt, and will be in debt as long as time endures.

With the help of the Lord, this afternoon I would like to point out some of these obligations resting upon the Church collectively, and upon the Church individually.

#### OUR INDEBTEDNESS TO THE LORD

James has said that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Everything that we possess, every blessing that comes is through the mercy and the goodness of our Father in heaven, and his Son Jesus Christ.

We read, in the second chapter of Mosiah, the words of King Benjamin which he was commanded by an angel to preach unto his people. I want to read one or two of these verses:

I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—

I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls, yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; and he has promised you that if ye would keep his commandments, ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth vary from that which he hath said; Therefore, if ye do keep his commandments, he doth bless you and prosper you.