

Parents, you may not see the evil effect of it all at once, but some time later in life when you find the character undermined, you may wonder what is wrong. Then, too late, you may discover that termites have undermined the faith—the termites of slander, of fault-finding.

The Lord has warned us against fault-finding from the beginning. He said it is the teacher's duty to see that there is no backbiting or evil speaking.

A WONDERFUL ORGANIZATION

What a wonderful organization the Church is, and how in every detail the Lord seems to have marked out the danger signs, as well as He has shown the paved road to happiness and success.

I said the prime duty of parents is to win and to merit the confidence, the trust—the trust of their children. If you haven't it, you had better worry, you had better pray. You may lose them. One-third of the Lord's children turned away. They had their free agency. But let us pray to God to give us power to win the confidence of our children.

And bishoprics, you fathers of the wards—pray that you may have the confidence and trust of the people. And if you have aught against any, go to them.

There is a story told that a company of botanists seeking some special flowers up in the Canadian Rockies, came one day to a very rare flower down on the side of a cliff. To reach it they would have to retrace their steps and go back ten miles to come up from the valley below. Someone suggested that if they had a rope they could let a boy down to pick the specimens. That suggestion was prompted by the fact that a little boy had been following them for about an hour, watching them silently.

They got the rope and said:

Here, lad, we'll give you \$5 if you will put this rope around you and permit us to let you down to get those flowers.

Without saying a word the lad scampered off. They thought they had frightened him. He went to a house nearby and soon came back with a man by his side. Then the little fellow answered:

You may put that rope around me, and I'll get the flower, if you'll let my dad hold the rope.

God help us as parents and officers in the Church to merit such trust of our boys and girls, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

This hour, sooner or later, comes to all of us here on the stand.

I have enjoyed this conference very much. We have had a spirit running through it that seems to me unique in our conferences. There has been a peace, and a quiet; there has been a comfort and a consolation

that I know have reached the hearts of all of us. I humbly pray, and ask an interest in your faith and prayers to the same end, that what I may say tonight will not detract from that spirit, but, if possible, add a little something to it.

I should like, brethren, so far as I am able, to talk with you, not at you. I should like to speak, so far as I may, as if I were talking with you personally, each individual, that I might bring home to you the suggestions which are running in my mind.

I do not need to tell you that times are dark, nor that hate well nigh rules the world, that men have lost their reason, that they are guided in too large part by the basest motives which we have, and that as we stand today we are almost back to the beginning of civilization. I sometimes think it is hard for us to get to the Lord, and for the Lord to get through to us, through this pall of hate and murder which seems to envelop the earth.

I want to thank you brethren, the Priesthood leadership of the Church, for your great service as manifested in the work of the people. You are faithful, by and large; you do love the truth; you do love the work; and your highest interest is in furthering it in every way in which you can. We of the General Authorities appreciate this service; we thank you for it more than we can express.

But our task is so great, and by ourselves we are so weak, that I wanted to say just a few words tonight on one or two points that might be helpful.

EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

We, of the Latter-day Saints, have everything, or we have nothing; there is no middle ground. We know, those of us who have the testimony—and all here have it, I am sure—that the Gospel was restored; we know that Joseph was a prophet of God. We know that the Father and the Son came to him. We know we have the Priesthood. We know that our Church organization is divinely built.

WHAT IS SCRIPTURE?

We have gained that knowledge by working for it just as we have had to work for every other kind of knowledge, for spiritual knowledge does not come without labor and faith, repentance, baptism, confirmation, the reception of the Holy Ghost. There are certain things which follow from that knowledge. Knowing these things, our responsibilities are almost beyond our bearing, except for the spirit of the Lord and the sustaining power of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord said to the brethren, Orson Hyde, the two Johnsons and M'Lellin, (I am reading from the 68th section of the Doctrine and Covenants):

And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

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.

Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants.

Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come.

This is the word of the Lord unto you, my servant Orson Hyde, and also unto my servant Luke Johnson, and unto my servant Lyman Johnson, and unto my servant William E. M'Lellin, and unto all the faithful elders of my Church.

With our knowledge of the restoration of the Priesthood and of the Church organization, are we prepared to go forward under this principle which the Lord lays down? I call your attention to the fact that there is no limitation as to the matters to be covered by that scripture of which the Lord speaks. Having in mind that this Church of ours is a practical Church, that it deals with temporal as well as with spiritual affairs, I submit that whatever comes from the voices of those who hold that authority is scripture, no matter of what they may speak. That conclusion to me is inevitable.

Anything and everything that affects the well-being of us Latter-day Saints or that has to do with our religion, may become part of that scripture; and when the servants of God speak to us about such things, speaking under the inspiration of the Lord, then their words become scripture.

How shall we know when they speak under the inspiration of the Lord?

I cannot tell you how to know, but I can tell you that every man holding the Priesthood, who is obeying the commandments of the Lord and is living righteously, he will know without doubt when God's servants speak under inspiration. The spirit will bear true witness.

THE DOCTRINE OF ONENESS

With the foregoing in mind, I recall to your minds that the Lord has said: "Except ye are one, ye are not mine." We cannot be one unless we are one in spirit, in belief, in knowledge, and in action. There is no other way. You bishops, bishoprics, you have had experience in your wards. There is nearly always somebody in your ward who is out of harmony with you, who wants to do things some other way than the way in which you want them done. There may be groups in the ward who think that what you do in the Welfare, and in the auxiliary organizations is not right, and they want to do it some other way. I do not need to tell you how much of a handicap that is to you in your work; you know it better than I.

You presidents of stakes know how difficult it is to guide and direct your stakes as you would like to do, when you have some bishop that draws off to the side; your stake suffers.

We of the general authorities know how difficult it is when presidents of stakes draw away, when they try to explain away instructions.

when they seem to try, not to find out what the President of the Church wants done, but "how can we interpret this instruction so as to do what we want to do, and yet come within the words of the instruction."

Among the general authorities ourselves, are we prepared to accept just what the prophet of God says and do it, rather than try to construe it to suit ourselves, to suit our own views?

ORDER IN THE CHURCH

There is an order in the Church, and you know that order as well as I.

I am much impressed always, as we all are, with the great book, the Pearl of Great Price. I want to refer to the third chapter of that book, where it talks about the different times, but that there is one time which rules all the others, and that is the Lord's time; where it talks about the different magnitudes of planets and heavenly bodies, and tells us that there is one heavenly body which rules the rest.

So we build up from the individual, from the lowest, up until the highest. The record then begins to talk about spirits. The Lord said to Abraham:

Howbeit that he made the greater star; as, also, if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal.

And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all. . . .

I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to deliver unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.

Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones

And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born. (Abraham 3:18-19, 21-23.)

The principles that I wish to get out of this scripture, brethren, are these: We were not all equal in creation; we are not all equal in authority here; we are not all equal in intelligence. But unless we are one, we are not the Lord's.

But how then can we be one?

We cannot be one with some bishop who has some plan of his own which he wishes to govern the whole Church. A bishop, great and important as is his office and calling, is in authority a shorter time, a lesser light, an inferior planet, a secondary intelligence, as it were. True, every

man, every officer in the Church has the right to inspiration and revelation as to how he should conduct himself and how he should carry on his office and his duties. But when that inspiration and revelation come, they will never be out of harmony with Church discipline, nor with the revelations of the mind and will of God made known to His prophet on earth. The president of the Church, not a bishop of a ward, nor the president of a stake, lays down the rule for the Church. Whenever any Church officer gets any other impression than to follow the president of the Church, that impression is not coming from the right source.

The oneness must come, brethren, through being one with him who stands at the head of the Church. And it is the duty and obligation of every officer of the Church to square himself fully, wholly, unreservedly, without deception, without equivocation, to the mind and will of the Lord as revealed to our prophet, seer, and revelator. I say again, this principle relates to all the things that affect the well-being of the Church.

THE WELFARE PLAN

I want to say a word about the Welfare. We have been urging the bishops to take off government relief, as rapidly as they could, the worthy poor of the wards. This is the counsel of the President of the Church. There has been some complaint about this counsel. Sometimes it has seemed as if perhaps we were not wholly one in that plan. Some bishops and presidents of stakes seem not to feel that this should be done. Yet there will come a time, I feel very sure, when for those worthy poor it will be the Church or nothing.

Already, since 1938, the federal government has reduced its appropriation for public relief by two-thirds. It seems inevitable that that reduction must continue. In urging the bishops to take off relief the worthy poor, we have asked them to go first to the children of the poor, to see if they cannot care for their parents, and we have said that if they cannot carry the burden, then the Church is to help, either partly or in full.

Now, we cannot give to the worthy poor of the Church all the luxuries that the rich enjoy. That cannot be done by any agency, either governmental or Church; but the Church can provide the worthy poor with the necessities of life.

We have heard of a few cases—I hope we have heard of all of them—where children have induced their parents to deed to them the parents' property, and then have put their parents on relief. We heard of a case the other day that was tragic beyond measure. The mother, a widow, had deeded her property to her children; she had secured a gratuity from the state; and then the children sent her away from her home, away from the children, away from her friends, down to one of those boarding places here in this city, where they "take care" of old people—I put "take care" in quotes—for a consideration.

This poor old soul had been brought down here, torn away from the

moorings of a lifetime, her friends, away from her children, to live in squalor, the charity ward of the state, while her children had her property.

When I think of your mother and my mother, who bore us, who went down into the valley of the shadow for us; when I think of how they nursed us, blood of their blood before our births, and fed us from their bodies after our birth, when I think of their caring for us through all the sickness of childhood—I can remember five of us in one room sick with diphtheria, with no nurse but Mother; when I think of all the anxieties that they passed through over our upbringing, all the trials to keep us in the straight path, when I think of how they toiled for us far, far beyond their strength, cooking, washing, sewing, mending; when I think of all this, it seems a terrible thing to me that I would ask my mother to deed over to me the little property she had, and that then I should turn her over as a public charity charge on the state, while I ate up the little property I had basely induced her to give to me.

The Lord Himself condemned such conduct in the Pharisees. He told the Jews that when they were seeking to avoid the responsibilities of the old commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother," by bringing about some kind of legal situation where they no longer were responsible for the keeping of their father and mother, that they were violating the absolute commandment of God.

It seems to me, brethren, that there is a way to lead every child to "honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Brethren: I would rather live humbly in a log hut, surrounded by my children, near my old home, among my old friends, than to live, torn away from all these, the charity inmate of a state palace.

THE CONSTITUTION

I want to say just one word about a subject that was touched today by Brother Widtsoe. I mean the Constitution of the United States.

I have expressed myself so often to this body of Priesthood that I need go in no details about this. But I believe the Constitution was inspired. The Lord said so. The Prophet said so; and the prophets since Joseph have said so; and I am not prepared to consider the Constitution in any other light.

I believe God inspired the Constitution because He knew that without the guarantees which that Constitution carries as to personal liberty, His work could not be established on the earth. We sometimes hear: "Well, the Lord can inspire rulers to change the Constitution. He inspired the first Constitution, he can inspire changes."

I should like to point out to you that in that inspired document, the Constitution, the Lord prescribed the way, the procedure by which the inspired framework of that Constitution could be changed. Whenever the Constitution is amended in that way, it will be an amendment that the Lord will approve; but whenever it is amended in any other way than

He prescribed, we are not following the commandment of the Lord and must expect to lose our liberties and freedom.

The Constitution was framed in order to protect minorities. That is the purpose of written constitutions. In order that minorities might be protected in the matter of amendments under our Constitution, the Lord required that the amendments should be made only through the operation of very large majorities—two-thirds for action in the Senate, and three-fourths as among the states. This is the inspired, prescribed order.

But if we are to have an amendment by the will of one man, or of a small group of men, if they can amend the Constitution, then we shall lose the Constitution; because each succeeding person or group who come into a position of place and power where they can "amend" the charter, will want to amend it again, and so on until no vestige of our liberties shall remain. Thus it comes that an amendment of our Constitution by one person or by a group is a violation of the revealed will of the Lord to the Church, as that will is embodied in that inspired Constitution.

Brethren, let us think about that, because I say unto you with all the soberness I can, that we stand in danger of losing our liberties, and that once lost, only blood will bring them back; and once lost, we of this Church will, in order to keep the Church going forward, have more sacrifices to make and more persecutions to endure than we have yet known, heavy as our sacrifices and grievous as our persecutions of the past have been.

May the Lord give us a desire to serve Him. May He give us a spirit of oneness, between the ward bishoprics and their members, between the presidents of stakes and their bishops, between the presidents of stakes and the general authorities, and between the general authorities and the president of the Church, the prophet of God, His prophet, seer, and revelator, and so sustained by us, who are the Priesthood leadership of the Church in conference assembled. This oneness must be on the revealed will of the Lord to the president of the Church, as proclaimed by him. No other oneness can bring us safety and security, and in no other oneness can we go forward building the Church and bringing salvation to mankind.

God bless us all, give us His spirit and help us so to live that the Holy Ghost may be our constant companion, help us always to walk down the straight and narrow way, give us always the knowledge of the truthfulness of the Gospel and a reverence for our prophet, seer and revelator, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Tabernacle Choir Men's Chorus sang, "The Long Day Closes"
—Words by Chorley, Music by Sullivan.

Elder Ray E. Dillman, President of the Roosevelt Stake, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until Sunday, April 9, at 10 o'clock a.m.