

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Again, my brethren, I am privileged to be with you in another general conference of the Church, and I bear testimony that I know it is by the healing and sustaining power of God that I am here. In another six or seven weeks, the Lord being willing, I shall begin the eighty-ninth year of my life; and shall have completed sixty-two years since I became one of the apostles; and shall have served twenty-six years as President of the Church. In all this, and in much else, the Lord has blessed me richly; and I am grateful I can say that I am better now than I have been during some of the weeks and months just passed. I come to the office nearly every day, and I refrain from speaking to you now only on counsel of my doctor, whose advice I usually take.

I thank the Latter-day Saints from the bottom of my heart for their faith and for their prayers in supplicating God in my behalf, for his spirit, for health, for vigor in body and mind. I am here as a witness that God does hear and answer prayer, and I pray that his blessings may be upon Israel and upon all honest men everywhere.

BLESSING TO THOSE WHO WORK IN THE CHURCH

I desire especially to extend my blessing to all the men and women who preside in all the stakes of Zion throughout the Church, in all the missions, in all the wards, in all the quorums of the priesthood, and in all the auxiliary organizations. I am convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that there cannot be found in any part of the world other men and women giving more unselfishly of their time, of their talents, and of the best that is in them, for the salvation of the souls of men. I am satisfied that there are no other people who are devoting more of their time, of their money, of their thoughts, and of their very being for the advancement of God's work at home and abroad, than are the Latter-day Saints. And with all the power that God has given me. I desire to bless the men and women who are thus giving their time and thought and are setting examples that are worthy of imitation, not only to those over whom they preside, but to all men. Every man and woman who is laboring for the salvation of the souls of men and keeping the commandments of God is entitled to be blessed, and I pray God that his blessings may come to them.

FAITH AND PROTECTION OF OUR YOUTH

Particularly in this critical time, do I pray for the youth of this generation, and for all those who labor for and with them, and who are responsible for their instruction. Their lives are beset by many temptations and evils and designs by those whom the Lord has chosen to refer to as "conspiring men." I pray that those who are at home and those who are away, in the armed forces and elsewhere, will be kept from evil in all its forms, by the prayers and righteous example of their parents, by remembrance of the teachings in their homes and

church, by their own faithfulness and prayerfulness, and by the protecting influence of the angels of heaven.

There comes to mind an experience in connection with my brother, Fred, after our father died. Because of the mistreatment of a step-father, and neglect, as a young man my brother ran away, and I was told by Brother Marriner W. Merrill, at that time bishop of Richmond, Utah, that the night after my brother ran away, he, Brother Merrill, went to bed rebellious. He said: "I turned to my wife, Sister Merrill, and said, 'I feel that the Lord should have inspired me to take that boy away from the man who has reared him. He has abused and beaten him. His father is dead, and his mother has left the Church and now he has gone out into the world with no hope that he will ever come back again.'"

And that night, so Brother Merrill told me, he had a dream in which he saw my brother in all kinds of wicked company in many different states, and he saw that a light surrounded him. In the dream he said: "What does that light mean?" And a voice answered: "That is the influence that a faithful, God-fearing and God-serving father can have over a son to keep him from going astray, and to eventually bring him back to the truth."

Years later when my brother did come back and joined the Church, as I related here last conference, he fulfilled Brother Merrill's dream, because Brother Merrill said that he saw him laboring all over the Church, bringing wayward boys to a knowledge of the truth, and he did labor from Canada to Mexico in that service.

I am sure that we need a light to surround our boys and girls in this day, and I pray that the protecting influence of faithful, God-fearing, God-serving parents may follow them and keep them wherever they go. I believe that with the faithfulness and obedience of parents and proper influences in the home, and with proper instruction and example to youth, we can keep them from all the temptations of the evil one.

I sympathize with our young people because of these temptations that beset them. I urge them, as I always have, to live the gospel of Jesus Christ fully. In that way they will have health and happiness and will meet with success in this life and will have an eternity of joy in store for them in the life to come. I bless them with courage to meet the problems that lie ahead.

CONCERNING VIRTUE

I want to say also at this time that the crying evil of the age is lack of virtue. There is but one standard of morality in the Church of Christ. We have been taught, thousands of us who have been reared in this Church from our childhood days, that second only to murder is the sin of losing our virtue; and I want to say to the fathers and to the mothers, and to the sons and daughters, in our Primary, in our Mutual Improvement Associations, in our seminaries and institutes, in Sunday School, in the Relief Society and in all of

our Priesthood quorums—I want it understood that the use of liquor and tobacco is one of the chief means in the hands of the adversary whereby he is enabled to lead boys and girls from virtue.

Nearly always those who lose their virtue first partake of those things that excite passions within them or lower their resistance and becloud their minds. Partaking of tobacco and liquor is calculated to make them a prey to those things which, if indulged in, are worse than death itself. There is no true Latter-day Saint who would not rather bury a son or a daughter than to have him or her lose his or her virtue—realizing that virtue is of more value than anything else in all the wide world.

The devil is ready to blind our eyes with the things of this world, and he would gladly rob us of eternal life, the greatest of all gifts. But it is not given to the devil, and no power will ever be given to him, to overthrow any Latter-day Saint who is keeping the commandments of God. There is no power given to the adversary of men's souls to destroy us if we are doing our duty. But if we are not absolutely honest with God, then we let the bars down, then we have destroyed part of the fortifications by which we are protected, and the devil may come in. But no man who was chaste and who was keeping the other commandments of the Lord has ever lost the testimony of the gospel; no man who had the knowledge of the truth has ever turned to the right or to the left, who was attending to his duties, who was keeping the Word of Wisdom, who was paying his tithing, who was responding to the calls and duties of his office and calling in the Church.

More than ever before, we as a people are scattered abroad throughout the world, we carry upon our shoulders the reputation, so to speak, of the Church, every one of us. And the young men and young women of today who think they are being smart by getting a little wine and a little liquor in their homes, and doing that which the Lord tells them not to do, are laying a foundation that will lead to their destruction eventually. They cannot go on breaking the commandments of the Lord without getting into the rapids. And what are the rapids? The rapids of moderate drinking, nine times out of ten, lead to excessive drinking, and excessive drinking leads to the destruction of body and of mind and of faith.

Any Latter-day Saint who actually believes in the commandments contained in the Doctrine and Covenants must have no regard for advancement in life when he fails to keep what is known as the Word of Wisdom. There is absolutely no benefit to any human being derived from breaking the Word of Wisdom, but there is everything for his benefit, morally, intellectually, physically and spiritually in obeying it.

What does the Lord say to those who obey his commandments?

And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.
And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them.

May every father and mother so order their lives that their example will be an inspiration to their children, and may all realize that every Latter-day Saint carries, to a certain extent, upon his or her shoulders the reputation of the Church of Christ. We are trying to raise our children to be God-fearing, and to live lives worthy of the imitation of all men. May we read the revelations of the Lord Almighty and his Son Jesus Christ, that have been given to us, as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants; may we read them with a prayerful and a humble heart, seeking God for power and strength to live them, whether we are at home or away from home; and may we listen and give heed to the counsel of our leaders who are with us today, I pray with all the power that I possess.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

I have little or no fear for the boy or the girl, the young man or the young woman, who honestly and conscientiously supplicates God daily for the guidance of his spirit. I am sure that when temptation comes they will have the strength to overcome it by the inspiration that shall be given to them. Supplicating the Lord for the guidance of his spirit places around us a safeguard, and if we earnestly and honestly seek the guidance of the spirit of the Lord, I can assure you that we will receive it. I am convinced that one of the greatest and one of the best things in all the world to keep a man true and faithful in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to supplicate God secretly in the name of his Son, for the guidance of his holy spirit. I am convinced that one of the greatest things that can come into any home to cause the boys and girls in that home to grow up in a love of God, and in a love of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to have family prayer.

It is not for the father of the family alone to pray, but for the mother and for the children to do so also, that they may partake of the spirit of prayer, and be in harmony with the spirit of the Lord. I believe that there are very few who go astray, that very few lose their faith, who have once had a knowledge of the Gospel, and who never neglect their prayers in their families, and their secret supplications to God.

But the minute a man stops supplicating God for his spirit and directions just so soon he starts out to become a stranger to him and his works. When men stop praying for God's spirit, they place confidence in their own unaided reason, and they gradually lose the spirit of God, just the same as near and dear friends, by never writing to or visiting with each other, will become strangers. We should all pray that God may never leave us alone for a moment without his spirit to aid and assist us in withstanding sin and temptation.

COMFORT TO THOSE WHO MOURN

I want to say that my heart goes out in the deepest sympathy and in as deep and sincere a prayer as I have ever offered for the comforting influence of the Lord to be given to the brethren and sisters who have sons and brothers and fathers and husbands in the war at the present time. I pray that the Lord will bless each and every boy who has gone into the service, and that he will help each of them to live in accordance with the principles of the Gospel, so that each may have a claim to the blessings of the Lord to the full extent that accords with His wisdom.

I am praying with all my heart and soul for the end of this war as soon as the Lord can see fit to have it stop. And to those homes that have been sorrowed by the loss of loved ones through death, may the peace and understanding and comfort of our Father in heaven be there unflinching. And to you who are bereaved by the cruelty of war, I say, do not look forward to a life of care and trouble and anxiety, but look only to the duties and responsibilities of a single day, and by performing the duties each day that rest upon you, the burdens will be lightened notwithstanding all the sorrow that may come into your lives and the many things that may be hard for you to bear. I know the anguish of your feelings, and I can say this to you out of the sorrows of my own life. I have been blessed with only two sons. One of them died at five years of age and the other at seven. My last son died of a hip disease. I had built great hopes that he would live to spread the Gospel at home and abroad and be an honor to me. But he was taken, as some of your sons have been taken. And never in my life am I so grateful for the Gospel of Jesus Christ as I am when some of my family or beloved friends are called home to their final reward. There is nothing in the revelations of God to Joseph Smith for which I am more grateful than the following quotations from what is known as "The Vision," namely, the 76th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—

That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness:

That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him;

Who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him. (Doc. and Cov. 76:40-43)

And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God. (Doc. and Cov. 76:22-24)

I know as well as I know anything in this life that Jesus Christ is in very deed the Savior of mankind, and that God has seen fit to

establish the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. I thank the Lord that I have an abiding knowledge of God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, his Son, and that I have pleasure in bearing witness to all the world of this knowledge that I possess.

Death has no real terror to any true Latter-day Saint. A faithful Latter-day Saint has been blessed with a testimony of the divinity of the work in which we are engaged and he knows that when he passes to the other side he will have an eternity of joy and happiness, and this I promise you—you who have lived righteously and who offer your lives in the service of your country, and you who live righteously and are left to wait, and sometimes to mourn.

FREEDOM AND THE CONSTITUTION

Every faithful Latter-day Saint believes that the Constitution of the United States was inspired of God, and that this choice land and this nation have been preserved until now in the principles of liberty under the protection of God.

Here are some of Lincoln's statements

"Let the people know the truth, and the country is safe."

"Let none falter who thinks he is right, and we will succeed."

"Let us dare to do our duty as we understand it."

The following quotation from Abraham Lincoln with respect to the observance of law is also worth repeating often:

Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the revolution never to violate, in the least particular, the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor. Let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the law be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap. Let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges. Let it be written in primers, in spelling books, and almanacs. Let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. In short, let it become the Political Religion of the Nation.

I quote here two verses from a declaration of the Church contained in Section 134 of the Doctrine and Covenants, regarding our belief in governments and laws in general, as adopted by a unanimous vote of a general assembly of the Church over a century ago:

We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man, and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them for the good and safety of society.

We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life.

These principles are fundamental to our belief, fundamental to our protection. And in the providences of the Lord, the safeguards which have been incorporated into the basic structure of this nation are, if we preserve them, the guarantee of all men who dwell here against abuses, tyrannies, and usurpations. From my childhood days I have understood that we believe absolutely that the constitution of our country is an inspired instrument and that God directed those who created it and those who defended the independence of this nation. Concerning this matter it is my frequent pleasure to quote the statement by Joseph Smith, regarding the Constitution:

The Constitution of the United States is a glorious standard; it is founded in the wisdom of God. It is a heavenly banner; it is, to all those who are privileged with the sweets of liberty, like the cooling shades and refreshing waters of a great rock in a weary and thirsty land. It is like a great tree under whose branches men from every clime can be shielded from the burning rays of the sun.

And such the Constitution of the United States must be to every faithful Latter-day Saint who lives under its protection. That the Lord may help him to think straight, and to pursue a straight course regardless of personal advantage, factional interest, or political persuasion, should be the daily prayer of every Latter-day Saint. I counsel you, I urge you, I plead with you, never, so far as you have voice or influence, permit any departure from the principles of government on which this nation was founded, or any disregard of the freedoms which, by the inspiration of God our Father, were written into the Constitution of the United States.

ETERNAL LIFE THE GREATEST PRIZE

Let us realize that God is mightier than all the earth. Let us realize that if we are faithful in keeping the commandments of God and cherishing the principles inspired of him, his promises will be fulfilled to the very letter. For he has said that not one jot or tittle shall fall to the ground unfulfilled. The trouble is, the adversary of men's souls blinds their minds. He throws dust, so to speak, in their eyes, and they are blinded with the things of this world, and the adversary obtains power over them, and robs them of their freedom, which is what he tried to do in the beginning.

I say to you, Latter-day Saints, that the pearl of great price is life eternal. God has told us that the greatest of all the gifts he can bestow upon man is life eternal. We are laboring for that great gift, and it will be ours if we keep the commandments of God. One fundamental thing for a Latter-day Saint is to be honest. Another is to value his word as faithfully as his bond; to make up his mind that under no circumstances, no matter how hard it may be, by and with the help of the Lord, he will dedicate his life and his best energies to making good his promise; and that he will not permit some personal advantage to cause him ever to compromise his principles.

I say to you that it is not an insignificant thing to hold the priesthood of God—to have the right to influence the powers of the heavens for good; and it is not a slight thing for us to neglect to honor the priesthood of God in those who preside over us, nor to ignore them in their counsel. My faith is such that I could lay down all that I possess rather than ever depart from the Latter-day work. I value all things as nothing in comparison with having the spirit of God to guide me. And I promise you, as a servant of the living God, that every man and woman who obeys the commandments of God shall prosper in righteousness, that every promise made of God shall be fulfilled upon their heads, and that they will grow and increase in wisdom, light, knowledge, intelligence, and above all, in the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. May God help each and every one of us who has a knowledge of the gospel to live it that our lives may preach its truth.

I leave with you my testimony that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God. How do I know it? I know it as well as I know that I live. I know heat; I know cold; I know joy, and I know sorrow; and say to you that in the hour of sorrow, in the hour of affliction, in the hour of death, God has heard and answered my prayers, and I know that he lives. I leave my testimony with you.

May God give direction to all of the utterances of this conference. May he bless our youth away, and us at home, and give his direction to the leaders of nations, and speedily bring about the accomplishments of his purposes. May he bless you, one and all, and every honest man and woman that lives upon the face of the earth, is my humble prayer, and I ask it in humility in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

That was a most inspiring and memorable address. It is most earnestly desired that every parent, particularly, every young man and woman in the Church will heed the instructions just given by our esteemed and honored leader, President Heber J. Grant. No message, no epistle written to the former-day saints was sent more sincerely or more authoritatively than was this message this morning from our great leader.

You will all join with me I am sure in saying: God bless President Grant whose life exemplifies the teachings of the Savior, whose representative he is on the earth at the present time, improve his health, and spare his life to lead us many years to come. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.