

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Third Day

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

We are now convening the morning session of the third day of the 115th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President Grant is listening by a special wire from the tabernacle to his home.

The regular session of this conference will now convene for a half hour, then the Columbia *Church of the Air* will be given.

The proceedings of this conference are being broadcast over KSL, KSUP at Cedar City, and KFXB at Nampa and Boise.

This historic building is filled to capacity. With the exception of the ladies in the choir the entire congregation is made up of stake, ward, and quorum officers, as previously announced through the public press.

Elder J. Spencer Cornwall, as heretofore announced, is conducting the music, and Elder Frank W. Asper is at the organ.

Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve will be our first speaker.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN
Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

The Church is often spoken of as the "vineyard of the Lord." It is so referred to in a parable that the Lord gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith, which I wish to relate to you here:

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants: Go ye unto my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive-trees;

And set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower, that mine olive-trees may not be broken down when the enemy shall come to spoil and take unto themselves the fruit of my vineyard.

Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive-trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower.

And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the noblemen arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees.

Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil?

Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you?

And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer. (Doc. & Cov. 101:44-54.)

THE CHURCH PROGRAM FAR-REACHING

The gospel plan has many fields of activity. Each one of those fields is vital and essential. We have the work of the priesthood quorums for men and for boys; we have the Church welfare plan; we have our financial system of tithing, and fast, and other offerings; we have the work of the auxiliaries; we have the plan of clean living, known as the Word of Wisdom, and many other fields of activity. Each one is positively essential in its place; each one was set there by the Lord himself as part of the plan of salvation. It is not for us to say that any part of the plan of God is not essential. It is not for us to say that any part is unimportant, to be disregarded with impunity.

One organization may not say to another, "I have no need of thee," any more than the eye can say to the ear, "I have no need of thee," nor the hand to the foot, "I have no need of thee." As Paul said:

For the body is not one member, but many; . . . if the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. (I Cor. 12:14, 17, 18.)

Let me repeat that last bit of scripture: "Now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body as it hath pleased him."

The Lord expects us to live the gospel by participating in the program of the Church. Every part of that program may be likened unto the trees and the tower in the parable I have read to you. Each tree was planted by commandment of the Lord; the tower was to be erected likewise by the commandment of the Lord, who clearly explained to his servants the purpose of the construction of such a tower.

Likewise, the various parts of our program have been set in the Church by the Lord for a particular purpose, a wise purpose in him, as a means of bringing into his fold the souls of men.

ATTITUDE OF SOME MEMBERS AGAINST OUTLINED PLAN

But there are those among us who do not consider that all these parts of the program of the Church are necessary. They feel that they are unimportant, and that therefore they are not in any

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way bound to comply with them. How much are they like the servants in the vineyard, spoken of in the parable in these words:

And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves, And what need hath my lord of this tower? And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace? Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things. (Doc. & Cov. 101:47-49.)

We might paraphrase the words of the parable to express the attitude of some among us by saying:

What need hath my Lord of this Church welfare program, seeing this is a time of prosperity? What need hath my Lord of a plan to remove the aged from the public welfare rolls of the state and the counties, seeing that we pay high taxes, and are invited to accept the government dole without so much as having to work to get it?

Or what need hath my Lord of this Melchizedek Priesthood program, with its four committees and its projects and assignments for the members of the quorums, seeing this is such a busy time and we have not time to take care of our own personal affairs, let alone bother with the affairs of our brethren? Or what need hath my Lord of an Aaronic Priesthood program? Why should we bother with a standard quorum award plan, requiring the boys to attend their priesthood meeting every Sunday morning, seeing that Sunday is the only day of the week on which they might stay in and sleep and get a little more rest than they normally could get? Also, why bother with such a program when so many of our boys are in the service of their country?

Or what need hath my Lord of printing and publishing a Church News for its service men; why should we bother sending it out to those boys, when it is just too much trouble to mail it to them?

Or what need hath my Lord of a Word of Wisdom, when I simply must have my cup of coffee for a morning "pick-up"?

Or what need hath my Lord of a tithing system when I need my money for other things?

To return to the words of the parable:

And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their Lord.

You look into the failure of any person to live the commandments of God, or you look into the failure of any organization to follow the outlined program of the Church, and you will find the person, or the organization, which does not regard the program of the Church or the commandments of the Lord as particularly important. "What need hath my Lord of these things?"

Invariably failure follows those organizations, because, as the parable points out:

... the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees. Doc. & Cov. 101:51.)

An Aaronic Priesthood organization which fails to take care of its boys according to the outlined program, will see its boys be-

come disinterested. Soon the boys start staying away, and before long they drift into evil habits.

RESULTS OF FOLLOWING OWN DESIRES

Where is the fault for such a condition? Is it with the boys, or is it in the failure of the organization to follow the outlined plan?

A father decides that the commandments of the Lord are not necessary, so he becomes inactive, and soon his wife and children likewise discontinue keeping the commandments, and soon we have an inactive family on our hands.

A priesthood quorum or other organization may be headed by officers who feel that the plan as revealed to them by the authorized servants of God is not really necessary and not really important, and that they have ideas that are much better themselves, and therefore they do not follow the program. Soon, however, they find that their organization begins to slip; that the interest of their members falls off, then the attendance declines, and before long the organization fails to fulfill the function for which it was created.

So we see the results of failure to follow the outlined program of the Church.

Then, in the words of the parable, the lord of the vineyard speaks and says:

... Why! what is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye have planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you? And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer. (Doc. & Cov. 101:52-55.)

REBUKE GIVEN BY THE LORD TO THE EARLY SAINTS

More than a hundred years ago the Lord desired to establish the center stake of Zion at Independence, Missouri, but the attempt met with failure, which caused the Prophet of God to grieve. The Lord explained to him, saying:

Verily I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance—

I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, where-with they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions; . . .

Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.

In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me. (Doc. & Cov. 101: 1-2; 6-8.)

That is so much like human nature. When we regard our work in the Church, let us remember that we are working in the vineyard of the Lord, and that we are his servants, just as the servants who worked in the planting of those olive-trees. And remember, too, that if we esteem lightly the word of the Lord in the day of our prosperity, in the day of our trouble he may be slow to hearken unto our prayers, to answer us and provide for our needs.

SUSTAINING THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCH

During this conference we have raised our hands and sustained the authorities of this Church; when we sustained Heber J. Grant as president, we took a vote also to sustain him as prophet, seer, and revelator. Then we voted to sustain the counselors in the First Presidency, and the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and after we had thus voted, we took an entirely different vote. This time we sustained this group of men as prophets, seers, and revelators, in addition to their positions of membership in the Twelve, the Patriarch, or as counselors in the First Presidency.

Some people ask: "When is a prophet really a prophet?" You remember the reply that is frequently given, that is, that a prophet is a prophet when he speaks by the power of his office.

I want to tell you brethren that the program of the Church that has been given to you has been provided to you officially by these presiding brethren whom you have sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators. This program has been given to you officially by them, functioning in their official capacity. Therefore what right do we have to say that this part of the program is not necessary, or that part of the program is not necessary?

Always we have been taught that the first principle of the gospel is faith. We have been taught that, "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." Can we say that we really and truly believe in Jesus Christ if we do not believe in the program of his Church? And if we do not believe in the program of his Church, can we say that we are truly and honestly followers of the lowly Nazarene? "If you love me, keep my commandments." Remember that command; each one of us should think of it with respect to our adherence to the program of the Church, whether it is personal adherence, whether it is adherence on the part of an organization, or within our families. "If you love me, keep my commandments."

LOVE FOR GOD SHOWN IN FAITHFUL SERVICE

When the Lord gave us the first great commandment, I am thankful also that he gave us that part of the 4th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants which says:

... O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. (Doc. & Cov. 4:2.)

If you really and truly believe in the first and great commandment, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, might, mind and strength, it means then that you will serve him with all your soul, and with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your might, and with all your strength. That means that you will serve him without reservation of any kind, and that of a truth you will put your whole soul, your whole heart, into the work of Almighty God, that you will apply the best of your intelligence, you will serve him with all your mind, by seeking to know the program of the Church, and then to live up to that program with all your soul.

It means likewise if you are going to love him and serve him with all your strength, that you will serve him, with all your physical strength, with all your mental strength, with all your spiritual strength, and with the strength of all your resources, whatsoever they may be. If you really love the Lord your God you will serve him in that manner. And all who do so are likened unto a wise man that built his house upon the rock, and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

My brethren, I pray that we may have the faith and the courage to follow the program of the Church. I pray that we may sustain the authorities of the Church not only with our hands, but that we may sustain them also with our works in following the outlined program, and not setting up something of our own which is not in harmony with the program that is provided by the inspiration of these men whom you have sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators during this conference. And this is my prayer, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

At the suggestion of President McKay, the congregation arose and joined with the Tabernacle Choir in singing one verse of "An Angel From on High" (Song Folder No. 23).

CHURCH OF THE AIR BROADCAST

Columbia Broadcasting System's *Church of the Air* was presented from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m., as a part of the proceedings of this session of the conference. Elder Richard L. Evans was the announcer. The program was as follows:

Announcer: The Church of the Air was established by the Columbia network so that representatives of the major faiths might bring their messages to a nationwide congregation of worshippers. This series, which is now in its fourteenth year of continuous