

ways in this, my brethren, there is only the straight course, right down the middle of the road.

At the beginning of this war, the First Presidency sent out to the bishops of the Church a request for certain information regarding men going into the service. There are several bishops who, up to this day, have never made any return upon that request even though it was repeated time after time. That is not sustaining the President of the Church.

Brethren, we have read enough about war and heard enough about it to know that an army to be successful must carry out the commands of the one who directs. We know enough and have read enough to know that when that is not done, disaster comes. As with an army, so with the Church, at least in the main. If we are to succeed, if we are to go forward in the way in which the Lord has directed, if we are to guide and direct those over whom we preside, then inevitably we must work according to one plan. Inevitably we must follow the lead of our commander-in-chief, him whom we have sustained as Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and President of the Church. There is no other way.

May God give us the power and the will and the humility to see where our duty lies, and the strength to go forward when we so see, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

My brethren, you have been very patient for the last two days; you have been in meeting very much of the time. Ordinarily, one would become exceedingly weary, but if we enjoy the spirit of the Lord, it relieves us of that weariness and we are happy.

INCIDENTS FROM MISSIONARY LIFE

I remember as a young man and missionary in the Southern States, the first conference I attended. It was out in the woods on a farm in Mississippi. We didn't have comfortable seats to sit on. The brethren had been permitted to cut down a few trees and lay the trunks of those trees across the stumps which were left. We balanced ourselves on those or else sat on the ground.

Our meeting started right after breakfast time, and we didn't even think it was necessary to have anything more to eat until evening. We stayed and enjoyed the inspiration of the Almighty, and we certainly were blessed, notwithstanding the inconveniences and discomforts which surrounded us. At that time there was considerable hostility manifested in Mississippi and other states in the South, but we just felt as if we had walked into the presence of our Heavenly Father, and all fear and anxiety left. That was my first experience in the mission field attending a conference, and from that time until now I have appreciated the fact that the companionship of the spirit of the

Lord is an antidote for weariness, for hunger, for fear, and all those things that sometimes overtake us in life.

I have enjoyed the addresses of my brethren. There were several others that we had hoped to reach today, men who have filled missions in foreign lands and who never have had an opportunity to report. I think that on the morrow we will try to give them time enough to say at least that they are glad they were permitted to come home.

We sang, "Do What Is Right." When I was in the mission field first, I went into a section of country where that hymn was known to the community, apparently. Two humble missionaries after walking until late in the afternoon in the sun, in the heat of summer, came to a small house that was at the bottom of a hill. When the missionaries arrived, they found friends who invited them in to partake of their meager refreshment. And then they were asked to go outside in the cool of the afternoon shade, on one of those comfortable, open southern porches between two rooms and sing some hymns. The people were not members of the Church, but they enjoyed Latter-day Saint hymns.

The missionaries had been threatened in that section. One of the men who had threatened them had kept watch of the road and in that way learned when they arrived. He sent word to his associates, who saddled their horses and took their guns, and rode to the top of the hill overlooking the little house. The missionaries knew nothing about it; they did not know that right over their heads, not very far away, were a considerable number of armed horsemen. But they had the spirit of the Lord, and as they sat there in the cool of the afternoon and sang hymns, the one hymn that seemed to have been prepared for the occasion was, "Do What Is Right." They happened to be good singers, and their voices went out into the quiet air. They had only sung one verse when the leader of the mob took off his hat. They sang another verse, and he got off his horse, and the others got off their horses, and by the time the last verse had been sung, those men were repentant. Upon the advice of their leader, they rode away without making their presence known. The leader was so impressed with what he heard the missionaries sing that he said to his associates: "We made a mistake. These are not the kind of men we thought they were. Wicked men can't sing like angels, and these men sing like angels. They must be servants of the Lord."

The result was that this man became converted to the Church and later was baptized. And I never hear that hymn sung but I think of that very unusual experience when two missionaries, under the influence of the spirit of God, turned the arms of the adversary away from them and brought repentance into the minds of those who had come to destroy them.

EVENTS OF LAST DAYS PROPHESED

While the brethren were speaking today, I was reminded of a scripture, and I would like to read a portion of it because it seems to me that we are living in the particular time referred to. I have in mind the third chapter of Second Timothy as follows:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, . . . unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, . . . having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts. . . .

But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (II Tim. 3.)

And so, my brethren, we are living in the latter days; we are approaching a time, if we are not already in that time, when ". . . peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion." (D. & C. 1:35.) Fortunate are we who have been gathered from the nations of the earth into the Church. Fortunate is this great body of men tonight, perhaps the largest group of priesthood that has ever assembled in this house at one time, each one a representative of the Lord.

EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS

I am grateful to see so many of you here tonight, leaving aside other things that might have been done. You have been busy in many cases all day, and yet when the priesthood is called together you come as if to say, "Here Lord, am I." If we in our homes shall so live that the spirit of the Lord abides with us, we will always be prepared to say when the call comes, "Here, Lord, am I."

Tonight, I congratulate myself with you, that in the peaceful quiet of these everlasting hills, in the comfort of this great house of God, we are permitted to assemble ourselves together, not to plan our financial uplift, our social uplift, but to plan how we may find our place in the kingdom of heaven, to dwell there eternally with Jesus Christ, our Lord. We will all be tempted; no man is free from temptation. The adversary will use every means possible to deceive us; he tried to do that with the Savior of the world without success. He has tried it on many other men who have possessed divine authority, and sometimes he finds a weak spot and the individual loses what might have been a great blessing if he had been faithful. So I want to plead with you, my brethren, be as anchors in the com-

munity in which you live that others may be drawn to you and feel secure. Let your light so shine that others seeing your good works will have a desire in their hearts to be like you. Wherever you go, keep in mind the fact that you represent him who is the author of our being. The priesthood that you hold is not the priesthood of Joseph Smith, or Brigham Young, or any other men who have been called to leadership of the Church at home or abroad. The priesthood that you hold is the power of God, conferred upon you from on high. Holy beings had to be sent to earth a little over a hundred years ago in order to restore that glorious blessing that had been lost to the earth for hundreds of years. Surely we ought to be grateful for our blessings.

Remember that as long as we seek the Lord, and keep his commandments as best we know, the adversary will have no power over us to lead us into transgression that may forfeit for us our place in the celestial kingdom.

THE LINE OF DEMARCATION BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

I think I would like to repeat something I have told many times as a guide to some of these younger men. It was an expression of advice of my grandfather for whom I was named. He said: "There is a line of demarcation well defined between the Lord's territory and the devil's territory. If you will remain on the Lord's side of the line, the adversary cannot come there to tempt you. You are perfectly safe as long as you stay on the Lord's side of the line. But," he said, "if you cross onto the devil's side of the line, you are in his territory, and you are in his power, and he will work on you to get you just as far from that line as he possibly can, knowing that he can only succeed in destroying you by keeping you away from the place where there is safety."

All safety, all righteousness, all happiness are on the Lord's side of the line. If you are keeping the commandments of God by observing the Sabbath day, you are on the Lord's side of the line. If you attend to your secret prayers and your family prayers, you are on the Lord's side of the line. If you are grateful for food and express that gratitude to God, you are on the Lord's side of the line. If you love your neighbor as yourself, you are on the Lord's side of the line. If you are honest in your dealing with your fellow men, you are on the Lord's side of the line. If you observe the Word of Wisdom, you are on the Lord's side of the line. And so I might go on through the Ten Commandments and the other commandments that God has given for our guidance and say again, all that enriches our lives and makes us happy and prepares us for eternal joy is on the Lord's side of the line. Finding fault with the things that God has given to us for our guidance is not on the Lord's side of the line. Setting one's self up as a receiver of dreams and visions to guide the human family is not on the Lord's side of the line; and when men, as they have sometimes done in order to win their

success along some line or another, have come to an individual or individuals and said, "I have had this dream and this is what the Lord wants us to do," you may know that they are not on the Lord's side of the line. The dreams and visions and revelations of God to the children of men have always come through his regularly appointed servant. You may have dreams and manifestations for your own comfort and for your own satisfaction, but you will not have them for the Church unless God appoints you to take the place that he gave to his prophets of old and in our day, and unless you have been divinely commissioned to do the thing he wants you to do.

So, brethren, we need not be deceived—it will be easy to be deceived—but we need not be deceived if we will honor God by honoring ourselves and our families and loved ones and our associates in the places which they occupy in righteousness.

THE GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED

It is a wonderful day and age in which we live. It will not be long until the servants of the Lord will go again to the nations of the earth in great numbers. I have been asked within the last few hours, "Are we going to open the European Mission?" I may say to you the European Mission has never been closed. We had to call home many of those who were there, but we left men holding divine authority. By appointment they have been ministering to the faithful, and the work of the Lord is still anchored in those lands. It will not be long before there will go forth from the headquarters of the Church, leadership to set in order everything that needs to be set in order, in power and might and faith, giving to those people over there another opportunity, in many cases opportunities they had neglected in the past, and in some cases opportunities they have never yet enjoyed.

We must preach the gospel to the South American countries which we have scarcely touched. We must preach the gospel to every African section that we haven't been in yet. We must preach the gospel to Asia. And I might go on and say in all parts of the world where we have not yet been permitted to go. I look upon Russia as one of the most fruitful fields for the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if I am not mistaken, it will not be long before the people who are there will desire to know something about this work which has reformed the lives of so many people. We have some few from that land, who belong to the Church, fine, capable individuals who may be called to go, when the time comes, back to the homeland of their parents, and deliver the message that is so necessary to all mankind. Our most important obligation, my brethren, is to divide with our Father's children all those fundamental truths, all his rules and regulations which prepare us for eternal life, known as the gospel of Jesus Christ. Until we have done that to the full limit of our power, we will not receive all the blessings which we might otherwise have. So let us set our own homes in order, prepare our boys and our girls,

and ourselves, so that if we are called to go to the various parts of the earth, we will be prepared to go. This will be our great mission.

JOY IN WORK IN THE CHURCH

I want to thank you again for the joy I have had in your companionship during my long ministry. I have been laboring many years. My first ordination to an office in the Aaronic Priesthood was to that of a deacon, within two blocks of where I now stand. I was baptized in City Creek within one block from here. I was confirmed a member of the Church within two blocks from here. But since that time and since I received that gift from my Heavenly Father, for which I have no words to express my gratitude, he has called me to go to many parts of the earth, and more than a million miles have been traversed since I was called into the ministry. I have traveled in many lands and climes, and wherever I have gone I have found good people, sons and daughters of the living God who are waiting for the gospel of Jesus Christ, and there are thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of them, who would be accepting the truth if they only knew what we know.

Brethren, let us be humble, let us be prayerful, let us be generous with our means, let us be unselfish in our attitude towards our fellows. Let our lives be such that our homes will always be the abiding place of prayer and thanksgiving, and the spirit of the Lord will always be there.

PROMISES MADE TO THE FAITHFUL

In conclusion, let me say, wherever we are, let us remember that there has been conferred upon us a portion of divine authority, and therefore we represent the Master of heaven and earth. And so far as we honor that fine and wonderful blessing we will continue to grow in grace before the Lord; our lives will continue to be enriched; and in the end, eternal happiness in the celestial kingdom will be our reward. That's what the gospel is for. Let us live to be worthy of it every day of our lives, and I pray that when the time comes for us to go, we will not feel as though we have neglected any of our own dear ones, any of our neighbors and friends, by failing to divide with them that which is more precious than anything that the world can give, because it is the gift of God himself.

I pray that peace and love and happiness may abide in your hearts and in your homes, and that we may go forward with renewed determination to be worthy of peace because it can only dwell with us when we ourselves are living the commandments of our Heavenly Father and honoring him.

May peace abide with you and with your loved ones, and brethren, surround your families by the arms of your love and unite them together in that bond of affection which will insure eternal happiness.

I invoke upon you the favor of our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.