

Drink brings cruelty into the home; it walks arm in arm with poverty; its companions are disease and plague; it puts chastity to flight; it knows neither honesty nor fair dealing; it is a total stranger to truth; it drowns consciousness, it is the bodyguard of evil; it curses all who touch it.

Drink has brought more woe and misery, broken more hearts, wrecked more homes, committed more crimes, filled more coffins than all the wars the world has suffered.

Yes, in accordance with the divine will, the Church stands absolutely and continuously opposed to smoking and to the consumption of all kinds of alcoholic beverages. It persistently calls to its members and to all others to abstain from the use of these body, mind, and soul destroying poisons. May the Lord give us all the desire and the strength to do so, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brethren and sisters, I pray that while I stand before you I may be guided by the Holy Spirit in all that I say.

A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

Two days ago, at the first session of this conference, the people present were organized into a sacred, solemn assembly. The men holding the priesthood were placed in groups, according to their offices in the priesthood. The women and those not holding the priesthood were placed in another group. Then, before the people assembled, were presented the Authorities of the Church, the General Authorities. The President of the Church, his two Counselors, the president of the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch to the Church were voted on successively by these different groups, and the Council of the Twelve as a group was voted on likewise.

It was an impressive hour, such as seldom comes to the Church. It was only the second time that I had been at such a gathering. This method of voting, this procedure, was known by our fathers in this dispensation. It was known by those of other dispensations, and undoubtedly is patterned after the order in the courts of heaven. It has profound meaning, much more than we can begin to discuss this morning when there is much to be done.

Among other things, at that meeting, we sustained George Albert Smith as prophet, seer, and revelator, and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That word, "revelator," has remained in my mind as I am sure it has in the minds of many who were here on that occasion. It implies many things. It implies, as we know, we Latter-day Saints, that God is still speaking to his children, and that revelation, continuous revelation, is a vitalizing, life-giving element of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the principle which distinguishes us from many other groups of believers; it is the principle that gives us the strength and power to accomplish the work which may

be placed upon us from time to time. It means that God, our Father in heaven, is still watchful over his children placed here upon earth; that in this changing day, he has not closed the Book of Revelation. His voice is still heard, and as new problems arise, he speaks, as we may need his help.

REVELATION THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

This Church was founded in revelation. It was born in revelation. Upon his knees, the Prophet Joseph Smith, just a lad, lay in the grove and prayed for light, and light came. In that light stood the Father and the Son who gave him information and commissioned him with respect to the work he was to do. Later on, through the process of revelation, by the operation of that principle, the Book of Mormon came into existence, and revelation followed revelation until we have a sound foundation on which to build throughout the ages to come. We believe in revelation, in continuous revelation. That, as a people, we must never forget.

When the Church was organized, on April 6, 1830, Joseph Smith was chosen President, the first President of this Church. On that day, before the day was over, the Lord gave a revelation that relates to what we did two days ago. I believe the words of God, then spoken, may be applied from generation to generation for our good. If he has given us a man to stand as the mouthpiece of God, a revelator, there must be some obligation resting upon us as members of the Church of Christ. This is in part what the Lord said on that day:

Behold, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ. (D. & C. 21:1.)

And then comes the admonition to us, our own obligation:

Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

For his word, [the word of the president of the Church], ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith. D. & C. 21:4-5.)

Now, we covenanted two days ago to sustain George Albert Smith as President of the Church. Let us not forget the obligation placed upon us by the Lord with respect to him and our own covenant.

Not only did the Lord say this, in this very interesting and important revelation, but he pointed out the common cause for apostasy, the common cause for falling away from the truth. He said:

For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory. (D. & C. 21:6.)

In other words, if we violate our covenant and fail to recognize the leadership of him who is called to be the President of the Church and God's prophet, the gates of hell may prevail against us. Too often, I am sorry to say, they have done so.

But he will give us strength, if we seek it, for later on the Lord says:

For, behold, I will bless all those who labor in my vineyard with a mighty blessing, and they shall believe on his words, which are given him through me by the Comforter, which manifesteth that Jesus was crucified by sinful men for the sins of the world, yea, for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart.

This is found in section twenty-one of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Some would say, reading these words, "Why this is just plain autocracy." They would say that it takes away from us our free agency if by sustaining a man we accept his words as if they were from God. That is not quite so, the gift of free agency is never taken from man. Moreover, the doctrine of this Church is that every man and woman, in his or her respective field, may receive revelation from Almighty God. This is a Church of revelation and revelation is not limited to one man alone. One man is called to speak for the Church. I have my problems from day to day, and I have equal right with him to call upon God for help in the problems of my day. By the spirit of revelation we accept the guidance of the revelator. That is always understood. The principle of revelation, that God still speaks, that he has not forgotten us, gives full freedom to act intelligently. If that were understood by the world, the peace spoken of here this morning would soon come. But, men depend upon themselves. They fail to call upon God. They fail to listen to his words, and floods of hate and discontent and evil stalk the world. We have had the experience of war the last few years; we know what it means when men try to depend upon themselves and their own power.

Every person may receive inspiration or revelation. The stake presidents have the right, in their positions, to ask for revelations from God, the bishops, in their positions; the housewives, in their daily tasks can claim real help from God, provided, of course, that they are sensitive to such help, provided that they are able to hear the voice of God.

When God speaks, some of us fail so to live as to understand the message that comes from eternity. I know some people say, "Well, how can I so conduct my life as to be responsive to the messages from the unseen world?"

There is an old illustration, a high school illustration, that bears on this subject. We may take a rod of soft iron, and place it with some iron filings, without apparently causing any change; the rod is not magnetic; but if we wrap that rod of iron with a wire carrying an electric current, it becomes a magnet. Though the rod has not changed, in shape and width and length, it has undergone a deep change. It

has become changed so that it attracts iron filings or whatever else is subject to magnetic action. Just so, if we, men and women, could wrap ourselves in obedience to God's law, live as we should live, a wonderful change is effected in us, and we, too, can then hear the messages of the unseen world. The principle of revelation and fitness for revelation, should be remembered by all of our people, by you, by me, and by all of us.

A SURE GUIDE

There is another thing to be remembered. How can I, a poor human being, distinguish between an impression from God and an impression from an evil source. The devil is always ready to deceive us. You heard Brother Petersen's remarks yesterday recounting a dozen or so of the devices the devil uses in this day to mislead humanity. The test of truth, given us is very simple, easily understood. When an impression comes, call it inspiration or revelation, compare it with the words that issue from the mouth of the prophet who stands at the head of the Church. Then, if your impression is in harmony with his expressed words, it is from God. If it runs counter to the prophet's teachings, your impression is from an evil source.

The Lord wants to speak to us; he wants to guide us. He wants us to hear. His Holy Spirit permeates the universe, touches every heart, and if it is permitted, will carry messages to us from the throne of God. The manner of our lives will help us to receive such messages and to distinguish between those that may come from God and those that come from the evil one.

This Church lives and moves and has its being in revelation—continuous revelation. May we remember our relationship to the living prophet, as we recall the great events of two days ago. God bless us and be with us, and magnify us in our labors, that we may stand as a light before the nations, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

What a comfort it would have been if I had known last Saturday that I was not going to have any more time than has been allotted to me.

SUSTAINING THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH

I have climbed this stairway for fourteen years, and I find it gets no shorter. I used to look into the sympathetic eyes of my father and gain support, and then into the eyes of my uncle, the President of the Church, where I found it. I still look into the eyes of the men who occupy these seats and feel a sympathy, a strength, and a support. My testimony is that it comes from the Spirit of God.

For the first time I have witnessed the inauguration of a Presi-