

marriage. I saw Betty's spectacular wedding with all of its flowers, costly gowns, and expensive appointments. I felt the labored formality of it all, the gasps of the curious onlookers. Mother, I desire a sweet, simple temple marriage; I want no rice, no old shoes, no wild demonstration. I want no pageantry no matter how colorful—marriage to me is a holy ordinance. What I would like would be for John and me to go through the sweet holy rites of the temple with just my folks and his, and a few intimate friends, where all is white and calm and beautiful and serene. Mother, I want no one unsympathetic to be present and nothing to be done which, in any sense, will mar the solemnity of that sacred occasion. This is a time when I want no hilarity, no crude or vulgar jokes. And as we walk out together, united for time and eternity, I want us to face the world with our minds and hearts still on that same high plane we found in the sealing room of the temple. I want us always to retain that sweet spirit of prayer and worship and peace. Thank you, Mother, I want to be married in the Lord's own way."

And as the curtain closes I stand in contemplation — grateful and happy that in the drama of life on the great world stage there are here and there episodes of contrasting brilliance and beauty which show the way to live the commandments of God in his own way.

My brothers and sisters, let us be true devoted Latter-day Saints. Let us love the Lord and our fellow men and live the commandments of God that we may have a full and abundant life leading to exaltation, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

#### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

In harmony with what has been said in this conference, about supporting the new President of the Church, I want to pledge to President George Albert Smith here before all of you, that I have every intention of rendering to him the same kind of loyalty that I gave our late departed great President, Heber J. Grant, whom I loved as I have loved few men.

In speaking of President Grant, I want to express my regret also for the loss which the Church has sustained since last conference in the passing of his son-in-law, Robert L. Judd, who rendered such yeoman service in the welfare work.

#### TESTIMONY COMES THROUGH SERVICE

The welfare program of the Church is very dear to me, and with the help of the spirit of the Lord, for which I pray, I want to say a word about it.

You are witnesses that when, with all your hearts, you work at a Church assignment, the Lord gives you a testimony that it is of him, and you have joy and satisfaction therein. That is the way it is

with me in the welfare work, which now for four years has been one of my major assignments.

During the weeks following April conference, 1941, while I was wondering what I would be asked to do as an Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, my wife said that she believed she could guess, and of course, she did guess, many times. Once she said, "I think they will ask you to help Brother Lee in the welfare work." and I replied, "Oh, my goodness, I hope not! There is nothing for which I am less qualified."

Well, in a few days I received a letter from the First Presidency, appointing me assistant managing director of the Church welfare plan, "to labor under the advice and direction of Elder Lee and the General Committee." Within sixty days I closed up my personal affairs, and went to work in earnest on this new assignment. I read and studied everything the brethren had said about it. I asked members of the General Committee and office staff hundreds of questions. I fasted often over an extended period, and prayed humbly for an understanding of the welfare plan. Twice I traveled through the Church into practically every stake and saw the welfare projects in operation.

I believe I have heard almost all the objections which have been raised against it, and also the labored arguments in justification for not living it. As I have listened to these objections and arguments, I have been painfully aware of the dull spirit in which they have been urged. All over the Church, on the other hand, and this is the thing which has encouraged me, I have seen the sparkle in the eyes, the spring in the steps, and felt the joy in the spirits of those who have tested the plan by the Savior's formula:

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. (John 7:17.)

I believe I have made a rather complete study, and I now testify to you that I do know beyond any doubt, by the same power that Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ, that the Church welfare plan in its inception was and now is inspired of the Lord; and that the great principles implemented by it are eternal truths, which the Saints of God must abide if they are to purify and perfect themselves as the Lord has commanded.

Very often in welfare meetings bishops and others are asked what results they expect from the plan. Almost invariably one of the answers is that through it they expect the members of the Church to be fed, housed and clothed, when present sources of supply fail. This is a good answer, and I believe that the truth of it will yet be a demonstrated fact.

#### SPIRITUAL MEANING IN THE CHURCH WELFARE PLAN

To me, however, Church welfare is more than just a plan to provide for the physical needs of the Saints. I am convinced that in

addition to being a way of economic salvation in the days of necessity, it has deep spiritual significance; and that should other means always be available with which to supply the physical needs of the people, still the welfare plan, or some similar plan sponsored by the Church under the inspiration of the Lord, requiring us to serve and minister to one another in temporal affairs, would be necessary in order to bring us to that oneness, equality, and

. . . union required by the law of the celestial kingdom. (D. & C. 105:4.)

Unity, above all else, is the one thing characteristic of the Church of Christ. The burden of the Master's great prayer

. . . in the hour of his approaching death was, that the oneness subsisting between himself and the Father should also subsist between himself and his apostles, and . . . between them and all those who should receive the gospel through their teachings. (B. H. Roberts, *The Falling Away*, pp. 1-2.)

The way to this oneness and unity has always been mutual consideration and helpfulness to one another. This the Lord declared to ancient Israel when he said, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19:18), and during his earthly ministry he reaffirmed this command as one of the two great requirements upon which hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27.)

In this dispensation, the Lord has made it clear that loving one's neighbor as oneself includes administering to his temporal needs. He said to the members of the Church before it was a year old:

. . . be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine. (D. & C. 38:27.)

And he prefaced this command by calling to their attention the inequality among them in worldly goods. Among other things he said:

. . . the poor have complained before me, and the rich have I made, and all flesh is mine, and I am no respecter of persons. . . . Wherefore, hear my voice and follow me, and you shall be a free people . . . let every man esteem his brother as himself. . . . And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself. (D. & C. 38:16, 22, 24-25.)

And then he illustrated the meaning of esteeming one's brother as oneself by a parable in which he disapproved of having one of his sons clothed in robes and given a seat of honor, while another son of equal faithfulness is clothed in rags and given a lesser place. (D. & C. 38:26.) It was against this background of instructions that the Lord gave the command,

. . . be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.

Fourteen months later, he said:

. . . the time has come, and is now at hand; and behold, and lo, it must needs be that there be an organization of my people, in regulating

and establishing the affairs of the storehouse for the poor of my people,  
 . . . for a permanent and everlasting establishment and order unto my  
 church. (D. & C. 78:3-4.)

Through this organization a certain equality in earthly things was to be obtained in order that the Saints might be equal in the bonds of heavenly things (D. & C. 78:5), and the Church was to be enabled to stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world. (D. & C. 78:14.)

Keep in mind that this organization was to be built around a storehouse from which the needs of the poor among the Lord's people were to be supplied. Some folk regard this as a menial temporal activity; but the Lord said its purpose was to advance the cause which the saints had espoused for the salvation of men and to the glory of their Father in heaven. (D. & C. 78:4.) He thus associated it with his loftiest endeavor, that of bringing to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man, which he has declared to be his work and his glory. (Moses 1:39.)

Who but the Lord himself could devise a way by which the members of his Church, rich and poor alike, can be so motivated that by the exercise of their own free agency they will administer to each other's needs in such a spirit of love as to move toward these great objectives? No one. And the Lord intended to direct the way, for said he:

I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine. And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low. For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves. (D. & C. 104:14-17.)

#### UNITY REQUIRED OF THE SAINTS

In another revelation the Lord prescribed loyalty to his way as a prerequisite to obtaining a place in the celestial world. (D. & C. 78:7.) Now, my brethren and sisters, when members of the Church, our own fathers, and mothers, brothers and sisters, and children, are provided life's necessities from sources other than those approved by the Lord, it is not being done in his way and does not fulfil the law.

The way prescribed for the Church, when these revelations were given in the early 1830's, was the United Order. The Saints, however, did not prove obedient to the things required at their hands in connection with this order (among other things they did "not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them" [D. & C. 105:3]), and were therefore not successful in becoming "united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom." (D. & C. 105:4.) As a consequence, the requirement to practice the United Order was withdrawn from the Church. The

Saints were driven and afflicted, and the redemption of Zion is yet delayed.

To us and for our day, the Lord has given the welfare plan whereby we may demonstrate to him through mutual consideration and helpfulness to one another in temporal things, that we do love our neighbors as ourselves, rich and poor alike, and thereby move toward the equality, oneness, and unity which the Lord requires of us. This plan is not meant for any one class alone. We all need the training it affords. The day for the ushering in of the great millennium approaches, and for that day we must be prepared to live as one in perfect unity. We cannot come suddenly to that happy state. It will take training. By putting the welfare plan fully into operation, we can move forward toward this high objective, and also to the perfection of the welfare program itself, "until it becomes perfect in all respects to the care and blessing of" the Lord's "people," as prayed for by President George Albert Smith in the dedicatory prayer at the Idaho Falls Temple.

May the Lord help us, my brethren and sisters, to understand the great principles underlying the welfare plan and comprehend the full purposes for which it has been given to us, that through living it we may move toward that "union required by the law of the celestial kingdom," I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I have felt confident that this time would come. This is a sobering experience, my brothers and sisters. Our great benefactor and leader said at one time regarding this great responsibility: "You cannot hide the heart when the mouth is open. If you want to keep your heart secret, keep your mouth shut." But he also added that when it becomes our duty to talk, we ought to be willing to talk.

#### QUESTIONS BEING ASKED

I desire to repeat one sentence from the revelation which Brother Romney indicated has already been quoted two or three times in this conference:

And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. (D. & C. 104:15.)

During recent weeks it has been my pleasure to visit with many young men and some older men, during which time they have asked several questions regarding some of the temporal matters pertaining to the Latter-day Saints. They have asked questions regarding the Church's interest in agriculture and farming. They have commented that they do not hear as much now about these things as was once spoken in the Church. Some of them have suggested that they would like to know whether or not the Church looks with favor on young