

together so that many people who were standing could have seats. I am going to ask you if you will do that tonight, if you will all move to the center of the seats. And when I say move to the center, I do not mean just to go through the motion, I mean move. (Laughter) Now if those ushers who are seating our people tonight will point the way, I think we can seat another two or three hundred people in this building. I would like to suggest to you that you can sit on the steps leading to the stand here, and that will make a number of seats, and then if any of you become tired, those who have not obtained seats, you will find that the radio is working in the Assembly Hall. But we would like to have you all here if you can stay here. Vacant seats here in front are available now. I am not sure, but I think this may be as large as any priesthood meeting we have ever held in this building.

We will now have pleasure in listening to the Men's Chorus. They will sing: "Come, O Thou King of Kings," after which President S. Dilworth Young, of the First Council of Seventy, will address us.

The men's chorus of the Tabernacle Choir sang "Come, O Thou King of Kings."

## ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

As I look over this vast number of Latter-day Saints, I begin to understand and to have some comprehension of why it is that I do not know people when I go up the street during a conference. I have met so many of you during the past year, and have been so kindly entertained that I have made some effort, some struggle, to know you when I see you. It is almost a hopeless task. May I say thanks for your many kindnesses and express a hope that you will understand when I meet you on the street if I do not remember your name. If I look a little blank, I wish you would be like Earl J. Glade, who said that he never goes up to a man he has met without greeting him thus: "I know you. I met you at this place." So with me. If you will say: "I know you. This is where I saw you," then I think I can remember better.

I should like this evening to be articulate for some of the inarticulate; I should like to speak for the boys of twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, and twenty-three. I should like to speak to them also, if I may, and if the Lord will give me wisdom, because they need speaking to as well as speaking for.

### AN INSPIRING SERMON

A good many years ago I read some things with a great uplift of spirit. I read in a book where a man by the name of Wilford Woodruff said that he was in a meeting once in which Parley P. Pratt was

present. Brother Pratt said that he had ridden for a long distance to reach the meeting place. His subject was: "Will you join us in Zion's Camp and go and rescue the Saints in Missouri?" When he asked for the privilege of speaking, he stated that he would speak for only a few minutes, as he was very tired. He started at early candlelight, as they called it in those days, and he spoke until after midnight. Brother Woodruff sat through the long sermon, thrilled and inspired. He said, in about these words:

I was so thrilled that all the gold in the world could not have kept me from going with that company.

I thought to myself I would like to have been thrilled that way too.

#### CONVERSION OF WILFORD WOODRUFF AND LORENZO SNOW

And I read again where a man by the name of Lorenzo Snow was going to Oberlin College in Ohio. He wrote to his sister and said:

If there is nothing better than is to be found here in Oberlin College, good-bye to all religions.

He told her that there was nothing at all for him there, but later, when he heard the elders speak, and recognized in their testimony the words of salvation, he was thrilled, and he could not join the Church rapidly enough.

As a boy I looked at the pictures of Wilford Woodruff and Lorenzo Snow, gray-bearded men in their last years, and I thought to myself: "That would be easy for them. They knew the gospel is true. It would be really easy for them to accept it." When I learned later that Wilford Woodruff was only twenty-six years of age when the experience with Parley P. Pratt happened to him, and that Lorenzo Snow was only twenty-two, then I could begin to see some hope for the young men.

Those men made their decisions when they were as young as you boys are. They did not wait and have a testimony come to them gradually. They had been investigating the words of Christ in the Bible for some years, as very young men, and when the time came for them to hear it, they were willing to accept it. They prayed earnestly for a testimony, for the Holy Ghost, and it came to them. To Lorenzo Snow it came with such a rush and power that for several nights he said he could hear the whisperings and the rustlings, and he seemed bathed in fire. His mind was uplifted, and he understood the scriptures as he never had before.

#### SEEKING FOR A TESTIMONY

I like that, and I say to you young men you can have the same experience if you want it. All you have to do is to want it badly enough because you can't "see-saw" around with it; either it is so

or it is not so. If you make up your minds it is so and ask the Lord to give you a testimony, if you ask in sincerity and truth, you will receive that testimony. Those men obeyed the prophet of God. You may obey the present-day prophet of God, and you may get the same thrill and happiness out of doing it. He needs courage to go on, the same as you do, and the men who have been sustained by this conference as prophets, seers, and revelators—sixteen in number—need it also. They have their discouraging moments, but the thing that gives them courage to go on is your faithfulness.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MARK AUSTIN

We have all respect for the aged. We young men know that they have been tried and not found wanting. They will stand and support the tabernacle as long as it shall need supporting.

I have learned one lesson in the past year, and I am going to pass it on to you: It has seemed to me, as President Smith moves about this Church, that there stand staunch men with their arms outstretched, holding the ropes of the tabernacle tight, so the winds cannot blow it away. All their lives they have shown by their works that they support the President and the Church. I have seen such a man, and I should like to point him out. I am going to be personal, and I hope the person about whom I am going to speak will forgive me if I embarrass him.

I have watched Brother Mark Austin go about in the welfare work. He is past eighty. For years and years he has been a bulwark to the brethren who preside over this Church. No matter what they told him to do, he did it. As I, a young man, have watched him, I have taken fresh courage that somehow I might measure up as faithfully as he has done and is doing. He does not let age interfere when Brother Romney assigns him to go on a mission over a week end to a conference. He is right there, no matter how far away it is, no matter how much discomfort he suffers. He is a true gentleman. He never interferes; he never gets in anybody's way; but he goes about quietly doing what he is assigned to do, for the glory of God and for the honor of the priesthood of the Church, in the name of the prophet of God.

We young men, and those of you who are twenty, twenty-one, and twenty-two, can learn to copy that kind of example. It does not come easy; it takes about sixty years to get there, but once arrived, you have a serenity of conscience and a happiness which cannot be equaled on earth.

These sixteen men that we sustain are honored. They are sustained as the prophets of the Living God. You men may also be honored just as much if you obey the words of the prophets of God. You see, a prophet cannot do very much prophesying without someone to whom he can direct his words, and he cannot ask for any help unless he has someone of whom to ask it. You are they. It is you who must hear the word and then go forth and obey it.

## EARLY DAY MISSIONARIES SET AN EXAMPLE

We mention Brigham Young a good deal of the time, and we mention Heber C. Kimball, two men who were as close to each other as brothers. We often speak of Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, David W. Patten, the first great martyr, and others as examples of great men. But there are those among *you* who are also great.

Have you ever heard of Zera Pulsipher? Many of you have not; some of you may have. As I read in the *History of the Church*, I learn about many of the great ones who have risen and whose biographies have been written, but if one reads in the books carefully, he will see that a large proportion first heard the gospel through Zera Pulsipher, and, as likely as not, he was the one who baptized them. His name is mentioned repeatedly in the histories as a man who was out preaching the gospel. Do you know anything about him? Nobody does. It was not his job to become the president of the Church; it was not his prerogative to preside over any of the great councils of the Church, but as a young man, about twenty-two years of age, hearing the Prophet's voice, he obeyed and went out spreading the glad tidings to the children of men. Because he believed it, because he was sincere in it, the Lord blessed him, and he was the instrument by which many great ones came into the Church.

You have heard it said in this conference, and you will hear it, I suppose, a number of times that blessed is he, and how happy will be he who makes one convert in the kingdom of our Father. If I remember correctly, Heber C. Kimball and his companions converted about three thousand, the very first months they were in Preston, England. But do you know the names of the five young men who took the gospel to Brigham Young, and to Heber C. Kimball? One was named Eliot Strong. Another one was named Eleazer Miller. The other three were Alpheus Gifford, Enos Curtis, and Daniel Bowen. How much joy they will have in the kingdom of their Father with the great prophets of the Lord and the three thousand converts from Preston, and the many thousands more from England that these converts made in their turn. Such is the lot of every young man who faces me this evening, and every young man in the Church if he chooses to obey the call. He may have like pleasure in going forth, and if he never does become great in the Church as an organizer, he can become great in the Church by the people he converts to the gospel.

## CALLING YOUNG MEN ON MISSIONS

Blessed is the boy, who, believing, goes out into the world at the call of the prophet and seeks out the honest of the earth. There is hardly a man in this room but whose parents or grandparents are the result of such work. I should like to make a plea to the young men, backing up what I heard at the last conference. President Smith made a blanket plea that the young men of the Church respond

to missionary calls. A large number of those young men have been taught in the past by their parents and by their ward authorities that calls do not usually come by blanket request. I mean by that, that they believe that they ought to remain quietly at home and wait for the inspiration of the Lord to inspire the bishops to come over and call upon them. If I understand it correctly, I think that President Smith wants every young man to feel that he can go to his bishop, and volunteer, saying: "I am willing to go." I believe that is the way to interpret it. In any case any young man does not feel that way and thinks he ought to wait until the bishop comes, I think the bishop ought to go to every clean living, righteous young man in the ward who is home from war, no matter how long he has been home, and talk to him about it, counseling with him and his folks.

Every worthy young man in this Church has a right to be called upon a mission, every one. I think it is not the right of any man who has a presiding place in any ward or stake to neglect any boy for the reasons that we usually give and have given during this year. I have heard many say, in many places where I have been, "Well, our boys have been away for a long time; they ought to be home for a little while. Give them a rest. Let them have a few months at home before they are called out again." I say to you there won't be many boys left at home, no matter whether you call them or not. They are not going to stay home. They have left home forever. They will come back and visit at home, it is true, but they are going to school, or they are going to marry, or they are going to do any number of things. But they are not going to stay home. So that is no reason. If a boy is able to go on a mission, he ought to be given a chance. Let him turn it down if he wants to, but don't make his decision for him. Make certain that he does not want to go before you cease to call upon him.

Do you think there is no need? Do you think we can't use them? In the mission of which I was a member twenty-five years ago, a year after World War I, there were two hundred missionaries. That many had gone out to the mission field. In that same mission today, there are fewer than forty, one year after the end of this war. Many boys are responding, it is true, and some of our facilities are taxed right now to take care of them, but they are not responding fast enough, and they are not being asked fast enough. A great many of the boys are getting away without being invited to go on missions. They have it in their minds and hearts to go to school, and they should go to school. They can go to school, but I do believe there is not any school on earth but can wait two years while the Lord's word is sent over the earth. I don't know of any finer school for any boy than to go into the world seeking out the humble, defending his Church, learning how to get along with people, teaching the things of the kingdom of God to his heart and in other people's hearts. He will come back a stronger and a finer man. He can go on to his school then and get a great deal more out of it, knowing that he has done

the will of the Lord and has acted as his servant on the earth at the request of the prophet of God.

### THE DESIRE FOR MISSIONARY SERVICE

That is the lot of any young man who wants to do it. I don't care who he is. But I will give to you young men over this Church one sentence: You've got to *want* to do it. I repeat: You've got to *want* to do it. The Lord can put it into the hearts of the Presidency of the Church and of the Quorum of the Twelve to call you on missions if you will accept it, but you've got to *want* to accept it.

I have talked to any number of young men lately who want to accept the call. Wilford Woodruff wanted to accept. He wanted to join Zion's Camp; he was warned that he might die, that he would probably lose his life. He said: "I don't care. I want to go anyhow." Lorenzo Snow wanted to go on a mission. The moment he was baptized and confirmed and had the Aaronic Priesthood conferred upon him, he packed his grip and went on foot to the missionaries, you've got to want to go.

My young friends, if we get enough missionaries you've got to want to go, too. Not half-heartedly, no, not with the feeling that: "I'll go if I'm called; perhaps I'll enjoy it, perhaps I won't," but rather, "In the name of the Living God I'll take his word and with his power on my shoulders I'll go to the whole earth, wherever I am sent, and bear witness to the world that the gospel has been restored and that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that President George Albert Smith is a prophet, and that this Church is the true kingdom of God." If you do that, you will never regret it as long as you live, and the Church will grow by leaps and bounds. Before you know it, it will fill the whole earth. God grant that may happen soon. I ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

### ELDER ALMA SONNE

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

My brethren, no one can rise on an occasion like this without feeling a thrill of emotion. I was impressed yesterday when President Clark read the financial and statistical report of the Church. It was a calm recital of figures, but those figures told a story of growth and progress. I was deeply stirred a few minutes later when Elder Widstoe reminded us that just one hundred years ago the Latter-day Saints were leaving the beautiful city of Nauvoo. They were then scattered along the fringe of the great desert that extended westward to the slopes of California. By what combination of circumstances could these men and women hope to survive? It required a great faith and certainly a great courage to undertake the great task that lay ahead.