

God help us, brethren, so to live that we may sense the reality, as I bear you my testimony tonight it is real, that we can commune with our Father in heaven, and if we so live to be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Spirit, he will guide us into all truth; he will show us things to come; he will bring all things to our remembrance; he will testify of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, as I do tonight, and of the restoration of the gospel, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Men's Chorus sang "Unfold Ye Portals Everlasting."

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, Jr.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren, I renew to you a sentiment that I think I have expressed every time I have met this great group of priesthood, since I have had the opportunity to address you. It is a great joy to be with you, to feel your spirit and to enjoy the inspiration which comes from your presence. I renew again the thought that I have so often expressed that if we could bring real unity, the unity of one man, into the priesthood of this Church, we would wield an influence that would affect the course of world affairs. We cannot do it and will not do it until we are so united. It is my belief that it is our opportunity, not only, but also our duty and responsibility to come, as the old expression went, "to a unity of the faith." I cannot believe that the Lord will hold us guiltless if we do not do this. It is the obligation of those who bear the Holy Priesthood of God.

NEGLIGIBLE PERCENTAGE OF FINANCIAL MISHAPS

Yesterday, in an aside comment I made, as I was reading the financial report, I did you brethren an injustice. I think that I said that our financial mishaps in carrying on all this tremendous expenditure and collection of funds would not exceed one tenth of one percent. In the last ten years there has been just a little over in mishap, eight ten-thousandths of one percent, and out of all those who handle these great funds there is not one man who is under bond. I dislike to boast about ourselves, but I think we may challenge the world on that record. I am grateful to you brethren for your integrity, your honesty, and your truthfulness which represents a long step toward the unit to which I have already referred.

SCRIPTURES REFERRING TO ONE TRUE GOSPEL

I thought tonight that I might read a little scripture to you and then refer to a matter to which I have referred before and which is very near to my heart. I am reading from Second Nephi, 26th chapter and 20th verse:

And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor.

Paul, writing to the Galatians, said in verses oft quoted by us:

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:8-10.)

I will now read from Second John:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.

For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. (II John 7-11.)

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians in his First Epistle, he used these words:

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. . . .

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (I Corinthians 2:2, 4-5.)

Then going on to the eleventh verse, to which I briefly referred this morning:

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (I Corinthians 2: 11-16.)

Those scriptures are clear; they need, from me, no explanation.

DESTRUCTIVE DOCTRINES BEING TAUGHT

I have said on other occasions, and I repeat now that there are being taught amongst us, unfortunately, doctrines which are utterly destructive, not only of Jesus the Christ, but even of God himself, and we must be on our watch that neither we nor our children be influenced, debauched, or polluted by such doctrines.

Recently a man of education (he holds a high scholastic degree), a worthy member of the Church, sent to me a statement of some of the teachings that now are somewhat mooted amongst some of our Latter-day Saints—a few only, I trust. I am going to read this statement to you and make some comment upon the points as I proceed. There are some ten points.

I wish to say to you as earnestly as I may, that, as you will see when I have read them, if they shall attain credence amongst us, particularly amongst our young people, they will destroy our faith.

The first of these statements reads:

"1. God is not an anthropomorphic being,"—

that is, he does not have hands, or eyes, or feet, or ears, or a voice—

"and not a personal God, nor a Living God."

I remember when Dr. Talmage used to say something not dissimilar from what I shall say, but he made an actual quote, as I recollect which I can only summarize after these many years. It went about this way:

"Thrust God out of the back door, and he comes in at the front door as the First Great Cause. Thrust the First Great Cause out of the back door, and God enters the front door as a Great Force. Push him out as a Great Force, and he comes back in as a Great Intelligence."

No sane man who can think at all can deny in his heart the existence of God, the God of the Bible, and of the New Testament, and of modern revelation.

The next point:

"2. Man is a creature of the Universe and draws intelligence and ideas (inventions) from the Universe by being in harmony with it."

This statement is not only indefinite, but meaningless. It does, however, seem to postulate a Universe Intelligence, and thus we are back to our great concept of God.

"3. There is no such thing as supernatural experience among men—at any time in history. No revelation directly from God."

This denies all scripture. It denies all divine manifestations

to man. It denies his goodness and his mercy and his love. It gives the lie to the commonest experience of man, recognized from the savage to the most highly civilized man; indeed, it gives the lie practically to our very existence.

"4. Jesus Christ was a revolutionary leader—but not divine."

This, of course, denies the divinity of Jesus. It falls squarely within the observation of John who declared, as I have already read:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ. (II John 7.)

"5. Joseph Smith did not see God nor really experience any supernatural phenomena. He wrote the Book of Mormon without divine assistance. He also gave revelations to suit his purpose and the situation without divine assistance."

No man can honestly read the Book of Mormon and then say that this boy Prophet wrote it himself, and the most persistent search has failed to reveal that he stole the book. There is too much in the book to have been written by a boy whom his hostile critics brand as an ignoramus. And it should be said here, he had no opportunity for consulting either the little-known sources, which hostile critics have disinterred in trying to destroy him, or the more widely-known sources of which he probably had no knowledge whatever because they were inaccessible to him. No man of his age could have had in his mind, no matter how much he had studied, merely the allusions contained in the Book of Mormon to the holy scriptures, and all that we have of his that came from him when speaking or writing normally, gives not even a suggestion of his power to compose or to utter those great gems of majestic literature which are so plentifully found in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

"6. The value of Mormonism is in its practice and in its system. Its origin need not be basic to one's belief in or acceptance of Mormonism for its value."

Many of us have heard this heresy before. No shallower view of Mormonism can be taken than is thus expressed. The achievements of our people, the growth of the Church, the people's endurance of hardship, misery, penury, persecution, and even martyrdom itself, would have been wholly impossible without the spirituality which lay behind and vitalized their whole lives. This people of ours had the Spirit of God to direct them. Take away from us that Spirit, take away the divinity which lies behind the gospel, and there is nothing left. Had our work not been divinely fathered, we would not have outlived our first ten years of life.

"7. The three-degrees-of-glory story is a myth."

That is, Paul was mistaken, the Prophet Joseph was mistaken.

all who have thought and taught that glory might come to those who live righteously and die with a testimony, some of them as martyrs, were all mistaken and all they believed in was a myth. Such a concept destroys the teachings of the restored gospel. The words of Paul and the words of the Prophet Joseph were divinely inspired and are the eternal truth.

Here is another mean thrust:

"8. Temple work may occupy old people in pleasant pastime but it is absurd and foolish in its objectives."

Thus these antichrists would not only abandon the living but discard the dead, their ancestors and loved ones; nothing would be saved, indeed salvation would for no one be a reality. Every instinct of justice and mercy, every really rational concept of man and his being cries out against any concept such as this. Temple work is part of the restored gospel.

"9. The belief that man might become as God is equally foolish."

This doctrine would, of course, wipe out the great truth of eternal progression. It would thus cut off from man even the hope of advancement hereafter; it violates every concept of the future brought to us by the restored gospel.

"10. Practically every theological idea advanced by Joseph Smith can be found in some ancient religion or in some current beliefs contemporary with his time."

There is truth in the conception that the restored gospel does contain among its truths beliefs held by ancient religions and by modern ones. However, the Prophet Joseph never had the opportunity, never had the books, never had the time to search out from these sources all these various truths from the paganism and the Christianity of the past. It was not humanly possible for him to do so at his age and with the meager facilities at his command. But we know how it came to be that these partial truths were found in pagan teachings of pre-Christian eras: the gospel was on the earth from the time of Adam, and from then on down, there appeared here and there in the world, among this people and that, recollections of the doctrines and principles of the gospel as they were taught to Adam. Some of the truths of the gospel have always been on the earth.

ADMONITION TO TEACH THE TRUTH

Brethren, this whole brood of false propaganda is an insidious approach and attempt to destroy the gospel plan and to overturn the Church. We must be on the lookout for it. We must fight against it wherever we find it. Hunt out those who preach it, seek to win them to a knowledge of the truth, seek to bring them really into the Church, because as they now stand and as they teach and

believe they have no place among our membership; pretending membership they are worse than wolves in sheep's clothing; they are as it were, Satan trying to appear as an angel of light.

Let us care for our youth. Let us not be parties in any way to the paganism, the atheism that is abroad in the world and that is expressed in these statements that I have read, for they will destroy our civilization if they shall come to be the belief of the people and to direct their lives.

God give us the power and the strength to combat these evils. I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

President George Albert Smith:

Is William L. Warner, former President of the Texas Mission, in the audience? We would like to hear from as many of our former mission presidents as possible, and will ask Brother Warner to come forward now and tell us how he feels, whether he likes it as well at home as he did in the mission field. He has not been home very long, and he performed a fine work in the Texas Mission. President William L. Warner will now speak to us.

ELDER WILLIAM L. WARNER

Former President of Texas-Louisiana Mission

This has completely taken the breath out of me. I rejoice, my brethren, in having the privilege of attending this great conference.

Since the opening session of this conference, and listening to the wonderful report read by President Clark, and by Brother Anderson, and the report attested to by the Chairman or a member of the Auditing Committee, many thoughts have passed through my mind. There is one particular item, however, that I would like to make reference to, and that is, as I remember the figure, it was a little less than twenty-one percent of the membership of the Church who paid fast offerings. When I listened to that great report of the amount of money being expended and the provisions that the Church is sending to the war torn countries of Europe, I marveled at the integrity of the people, the response of the Saints in gathering this vast amount of food and clothing. I thought if we could and would accept the instructions given us at this conference, and could double that, how much more this food and the clothing would help those who are destitute in Europe.

To me that was fast offerings in action. All my life I have been taught to pay fast offerings. Today we see it in action.

I had the privilege of presiding over the Texas-Louisiana Mission for the past four and a half years. It is a great country. It was stated by someone, yesterday, in reporting his mission, that he covers the greater portion of six states. The Texas-Louisiana Mission