

work assigned to me without the blessings of the Lord and your faith and prayers in my behalf.

I thank God for the testimony which burns within my soul, that I know this is the true gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet of God, and the others who have succeeded him to our present prophet and President, George Albert Smith, are called of God. I bear you this testimony and by virtue of my office and calling pronounce the blessings of God upon you, his people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ALBERT E. BOWEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

This morning President Smith sketched for us a little of the history of our people over a hundred years. He could but sketch it, of course, but in the outline he drew, he was able to stimulate thinking within us that induced each one of us to fill in the outline from his own store of knowledge. The thought stimulated in me as I listened was in the form of a question. What started it all? What were the beginnings of it?

THE BEGINNINGS

He called our attention to a monument that is building in these grounds in honor of the handcart companies who started out from Iowa City on their journey to Salt Lake. I remember that my father, then a youth of nineteen, put all his earthly possessions on one of those little carts and pulled it or pushed it all the way to this city.

But Iowa City was not the beginning. From Wales he had come there. And the beginning was not in Wales. The beginning was not in Nauvoo where the people began their march across this continent. Behind that was an event in the state of New York where a boy knelt down to pray and where, in answer to that prayer, the God of heaven came bringing with him one whom he introduced as his Son, and whom he bade the praying boy to hear.

Neither was that the beginning. We should have to go back centuries to find that, eighteen of them at least, to the day when the star which guided the wise men stood over the manger, and the heavenly chorus sang, "Glory to God in the highest." That had antecedents, too, but I shall have no time to go back into them. I choose, rather, to begin with that event. That was the earthly beginning, if I may use that phrase, of the migration of our forebears to this land. That was when the Word was made flesh and came to dwell among men, and out of that circumstance derives the power and authority, the teaching, the inspiration that have moved all else to this hour.

MISSION OF THE SAVIOR

The Babe of Bethlehem entered upon his great mission alone. He went alone to be baptized of John. Alone he went from there

Friday, October 3

First Day

into the wilderness where he fought his great spiritual battle and emerged triumphant over all blandishing allurements to pride, ambition, self-glorification, and worldly renown, and devoted himself to the mission to which the Father had consecrated him. Alone he retraced his steps, and going singly to one, and yet another, he bade each to follow him, until he had chosen twelve—humble men, all! And these he took under his tuition and taught them and trained them so that they might be able to carry on when he himself should be gone. He recognized that his message was a universal message, that it was a permanent message, not designed for the time of his earthly existence only, but something to be carried on after he himself should be gone. And these men he trained to be his ambassadors. With them alone he set out to transform the world, and, miracle of miracles, he did it—the most astounding miracle that ever was performed.

He made no revolutionary conquest. That was not the way of his procedure. He recognized that great principle of which Elder [Henry D.] Moyle has so eloquently spoken, the right of each person to make free choice and decide for himself, the only principle upon which man can ever unfold his powers and grow into the image of God. He was not popular: he was maligned, misrepresented, his motives misstated, and finally, betrayed and put to death. But the ideal he had loosed upon the world did not die. And here these disciples whom he had chosen, trained, and taught, men of human frailty, had to pick up and carry on. These disciples of his, humble and weak though they were and full of mortal imperfections, carried on triumphantly.

They were not any more popular than he had been. The doctrines coming from them were no more palatable than they had been coming from the Master himself, but he had given them one of the most sobering assignments ever given to man. He had already triumphed over death. And his last visit with them, just before his taking his final earthly leave of his disciples, he declared:

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (Matt. 28:18.)

COMMISSION TO DISCIPLES

That is a pronouncement which for boldness and assurance has never been equaled, I believe in all the world's history. It was a fitting preface to the great calling then delivered over to them. He commissioned them,

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. (*Ibid.*, 19, 20.)

And he authorized them to make an equally great promise.

He that believeth . . . shall be saved. (Mark 16:16.)

It is true that certain other things were required to be done, but they were incidents of belief. Everybody who believed, really and

truly believed, with conviction in his soul, would do those other things. As the root of the whole matter was the injunction to believe.

MIRACULOUS GROWTH OF EARLY CHURCH

It was not a sudden happening. It required about three hundred years, a period three times as long as that which has elapsed since the coming of our pioneers to this city, but by the end of that time, the great Roman Empire which had been the persecutor of the disciples, which had thrown them to the beasts in the Roman circus, with a determination to stamp them out, and to destroy them and all their followers—by the end of that period of three hundred years—the majority of the people of that same empire were professed worshippers of the Son of God.

Talk about miracles! No greater miracle has ever been performed, and no greater triumph of fidelity is recorded in history.

Suppose those disciples had been recreant to their trust. Suppose they had failed. Then the message could not have been perpetuated, and this world might have been denied the inestimable blessings that flow from the teachings of the Savior of men. If you want to know how much we should have missed if that teaching had not been preserved through the fidelity of these men, just try to picture to yourselves what we should have to blot out from our lives if we took away all the teachings of the Master.

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN NATIONS

And those disciples had to start out from the bottom. They had to get the people to accept Jesus. There was no use trying to ask people to accept his doctrines or to admonish them to live them unless first they could convert the people to believe in him. Their first job was to persuade men to accept Jesus as the Christ. And, as I said a moment ago, with the lapse of three hundred years, the majority of the people of the Roman Empire itself had accepted the word, and that nation, or that empire, together with all the nations that sprang out of its breaking up, and the nations of the occidental world that have grown up since then, have delighted to call themselves Christian nations in honor of the name of the crucified Son of God. The gauge of progress among those nations has been that degree in which they have fostered and preserved the principles of freedom, the rights of the individual man: Those nations, the Christian nations of the world, have, since their forming, stood out as the commanding nations among all the peoples of this earth. There have been no other nations with comparable progress and power and influence to that wielded by the Christian nations. There has never been in all history any domination of nations and their history comparable to that domination of the Christian nations which Jesus of Nazareth, though crucified, exercised over them. In all the annals of this world there is no parallel to that power and influence over the lives of nations and of men.

BREAKDOWN OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

That being the case, we might naturally have supposed or assumed—with the great unmeasured blessings that have come to those nations—that they would have been true to their heritage, that they would have continued in reverent regard of the name of him from whom the activating teachings came. Unhappily, that seems to be a presumption that we are not permitted to indulge. There has come over this earth now a disheartening breakdown of all the Christian standards. Skepticism, self-sufficiency, atheism, a denial of the divinity of Jesus the Christ, have supplanted belief, and lapses from the moral standards are but the natural result of the breaking down of that faith.

There is one thing of which we may be sure and that is that the teachings of the gospel, the gospel of the twentieth century, if you please, are the same as the teaching which was given in the first century. The gospel does not change, though its manner of presentation and technique may. Fundamentally, its basic principles do not alter. If the world had been true, if the Christian nations had remained firm in their faith, we could not have had the two last great wars which broke out right in the heart of Christendom. It comes from a teaching that there is no divinity whom one must revere; that all creeds are alike, as is now taught, and that to be cosmopolitan we have to accept them all and put all of them on the same plane of merit.

SUGGESTION OF LEARNED DOCTOR

I have here in my hand a clipping which I took recently from the daily press in which a learned doctor, addressing a professedly Christian body of worshipers, and speaking obviously in a manner congenial to their spirits, accused Christianity of spiritual arrogance and suggested that it abandon its claim to a monopoly of the way to salvation. Here are some of his exact words as quoted:

Christianity has been guilty of spiritual arrogance on a worldwide scale, labeling all other religions false and asserting that only when all mankind accepts the one true religion will there be any hope for worldwide co-operation and peace. That amounts to spiritual imperialism and is as out-of-date in our world today as any form of imperialism.

He said:

Only by recognizing the basic human equality of all religions is it possible to reach a world fellowship of faith inspiring man in his efforts to create a decent kind of world society.

The worthy doctor agrees with neither Jesus nor history.

RELIGION IS GOD-REVEALED

What becomes of God and Christ in a religion like that? That kind of declaration brings us face to face with this question. What is religion anyhow? Is it something that man makes for his own

convenience, subject to change with all the alterations in the moods of the times, or is it something God-revealed, something that stands eternally true, a basis for conduct and a guide to our lives?

When you put God out, then atheism, skepticism, cynicism, all flock in; and when they flock in, their natural incidentals, the breaking down of standards by which men have lived enter in, and we have the turmoil and confusion and degradation that characterize this world today.

The ideal of the perfect life is no chimerical mirage because Jesus came and exemplified the perfect life. Through observance of the principles by which his life was ordered, man, too, may grow to perfection. There is no higher call to duty today than that the Church should teach faith in him and preserve it in the hearts of men. Without arrogance or boasting but in toleration and humility it must be true to its trust by teaching what Jesus taught: that there is one faith, one Lord and one baptism and that Jesus is the Christ.

May God give us the power for the need, I pray in his name. Amen.

President J. Reuben J. Clark, Jr:

The Relief Society Singing Mothers will now sing to close: "Praise Ye The Father"—(Gounod).

The closing prayer will be offered by President Twayne Austin of the West Pocatello Stake, Pocatello, Idaho, after which this Conference will stand adjourned until ten o'clock tomorrow morning, Saturday, October 4. The proceedings of that session will be broadcast over the same stations that are broadcasting today.

The Choir music for this session and the morning session, as has been repeatedly announced, was by the Relief Society Singing Mothers of the Central Utah Region. Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen has conducted the Choir. Elder Frank W. Asper has been the organist.

We should like to extend to Sister Madsen and the Choir our deep appreciation and our sincere thanks for the excellence of the music which they have rendered to us. I think Sister Madsen is entitled to particular reference. She has trained, as I understand it, two great choirs extending over a period of many weeks, and the result of her efforts is shown by the splendid singing we have had today and which was incident to the Relief Society Conference and their concert. We thank you Relief Society Singing Mothers, Sister Madsen and Brother Asper for your services.

Tomorrow morning the audience should be in their seats not later than ten minutes before the time of beginning.

Singing by the Relief Society Singing Mothers: "Praise Ye The Father."

President Twayne Austin of the West Pocatello Stake offered the benediction.

Conference adjourned until Saturday, October 4, at 10:00 a.m.