

PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

It falls to my lot as the President of the Church to make some concluding remarks.

I would like to ask all of you, could you imagine any other place that we could have been during the past three days, where we would have been nearer to our Heavenly Father than we have in this great conference? Is there any place in the world where you could gather together a group of men who, one after another, would stand on their feet and bear witness that they know the gospel is here and that we are partakers of it and testify of the blessings that result from keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father?

SMOKER FAILS TO GET JOB

The brethren have reminded me of one or two little incidents that I think I will relate. One has to do with a cigaret. One of our missionaries who filled a good mission came home and sought employment and was unable to find it here. He had been a smoker before he went on his mission, but he had quit, so when he came back and became a little bit discouraged, he took up his habit of smoking again. About that time a non-Latter-day Saint businessman spoke to one of the prominent men of the Church, also in business, and said, "I need a man to come into my business, one that is capable and able to grow to take my place, because I want to retire after a while. I can pay him a good salary, and I have concluded that, while I am not a member of your Church, I would like to have one of your returned missionaries. They have had such wonderful experiences, many of them. I've heard some of them talk. If one of them comes home and you know of him, you don't need to tell him what it is all about, just send him to me with the understanding that there may be a position. I'd like to interrogate him."

Not long after that the young man who had been seeking work visited the office of the brother who told me this story. He said to the young man: "I think I know where you can find employment." He sent the returned missionary to the individual who had told him without hesitation what he wanted. This returned missionary was a fine, intelligent, young fellow, and he supposed it meant a job for him.

Our Church businessman said, "I met the young applicant on the street two or three days after, and asked him, 'How did you come out?' The young man said, 'I didn't succeed. The man asked me a few questions and then remarked, 'I think we had better not try it out together.'"

Sometime later the two businessmen met, and the member asked the non-member why the young man had not been employed. He replied, "When the missionary came into my office, he told me you had sent him. I thought to myself, this is my opportunity. He was a fine-looking young fellow and appeared satisfactory to me. As he entered the office, I was smoking my pipe, and all at once he took a cigaret

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out of his pocket and lit it, and we started to talk. I said to him, 'I thought you were a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.' He replied, 'I am,' and I said, 'I thought you were a returned missionary.' 'I am,' he answered.

"I'm sorry, I wanted just such an individual as I thought you might be, but what are you smoking for?" and the young man said, 'You are smoking; why shouldn't I smoke?' I said, 'The difference is this: You have been taught that it is not a proper thing to smoke; I was never taught that. You are violating the advice and desires of those who love you, and I think there is no use discussing this matter any further. I will just say that I haven't any position ready for you, and we'll part.'"

That young man lost a fine position because he had that *filthy* habit, and that's the only word I can think of just now that exactly fills the bill.

RETURNED MISSIONARY WHO LACKED COURAGE OF CONVICTION

Another instance that may be of interest: one of our missionaries returned from the Eastern States where he had become acquainted with a shop foreman in a large manufacturing establishment, and after returning home he tried for some time to secure employment but was not successful. Finally he said to himself, "Well, I believe if I go back East, my friend there will give me a job."

He was a very fine, capable young fellow, but the friend that he spoke of did not know that he was a member of the Church. So when he went to him and said, "I've come back. I wonder if you will give me something to do?" the foreman said, "Certainly I will; come right in." So the young man began work in the very city where he had been laboring as a missionary. He avoided the members of the Church; he didn't go to meeting; he kept away from them because he was afraid the men who employed him who were not members of the Church would not give him the same kind of opportunity for advancement if they knew who he was. But he was a good worker and kept at it for some time.

One day, after he had been there about three months, the shop foreman called him and said, "You had better go upstairs; the president wants to see you." The president had told the shop foreman that he needed a young man for another department who had ability. He wanted a young man with a good education. He said, "Look around, and if you can find such a man as that, let me know."

The foreman replied, "We have just such a man working for us right now."

"Already in our employ?" the president asked.

"Yes."

The president said, "That pleases me. Send him up to see me." So the young man, not knowing what the circumstances were reported to the president's office and said, "I understand, Mr. Grant, that you want to speak to me."

He answered, "Yes. Have you been sent up by the shop foreman?"

The young man replied, "Yes, sir."

"Please sit down. I want to know something about you; I'd like to know where you are from."

"Well," the young man said, "I live away out in the Rocky Mountains." That was the first hedge.

"But, what part of the Rocky Mountains?"

"Well," he replied, "not very far from Idaho."

"But what are you doing here?"

"Well," he said, "I'm here working as one of your employees."

"Were you ever here before?"

"Yes."

"Do you know anybody here in the city?"

"Not very many, just two or three."

"Well, I don't quite understand why you came back here for employment."

I want to say before going any further, the president knew all about this boy. He had had somebody check his record, and so when he kept hedging, the president asked, "But who are your friends here?"

"Oh," he replied, "they're just people that work around town."

"But," the president continued, "do you belong to any church?"

"Well, not here."

"Did you ever belong to a church?"

He said, "Yes, I did at one time," and he began to be afraid the president did know who he was, and he didn't want him to find out now, so he kept on hedging and said, "At one time I was a member of a church, but I didn't take much interest in it, and I'm not doing much at it now."

"What church was it?"

"Well, you'd call it the Mormon Church."

The president said, "Do you mean to tell me that you are a son of a Mormon family?"

The boy knew the jig was up with him then; so he answered, "Yes, sir."

The president queried, "Do you mean to tell me that you would desert the faith of your parents, when you had known that they were Mormons and desired you to be one?"

"Well, not exactly that."

"I'm afraid," the president said, "you're not much credit to them. If you haven't the courage to stand up for your faith, what good are you? Now," he said, "I will be plain with you. I thought you were the man I was seeking for this position, but I want to say to you that if you would betray your parents and go back on the Church you belong to, I'd be afraid to give you any kind of a job where you have to handle money." And so the young man lost his opportunity be-

cause he did not have the courage to do his duty by his Church and his family.

These things happen so many times; while on the contrary our boys and girls who keep the commandments of the Lord, and observe the advice of our Heavenly Father, need not be afraid anywhere.

ADVANTAGES OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

I have traveled considerably in the world, myself. I have covered approximately a million miles. I have been in the homes of the rich and the poor, in many parts of the world, and I never have found one instance among the better class of people where I have been, where if they knew I was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it was any detriment to me. But I have known many cases where it has opened the way and offered opportunity that I couldn't have had before. You know, it is a strange thing that it is possible for an individual to belong to the Church, not just a church, but to belong to the Church, to have had a witness and a testimony that the Lord himself established this Church, to know that he spoke by the power that he had, in his wisdom, and gave to us in this day the gospel of Jesus Christ, again, and to belong to just such an organization. No other church in the world makes such a claim as we do. When I see this wonderful group of young folk, behind us here, and the choir, and those that we had from Provo yesterday, and others that we meet all the time, I know of no other place in the world where you can find such young people as the Lord gives to us in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Where can you go, in all the world, and find such companionship as you can have in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? It is his Church. He gave it his name, and he advised us that it should be so called. Again I want to mention that fact to some of our brethren. Don't let the Lord down by calling this the Mormon Church. He didn't call it the Mormon Church. It is all right for us to believe in the Book of Mormon. He expects us to do that, but he told us what to call this Church. The Lord has said:

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. (III Nephi 27:8.)

This is his Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I sometimes feel disappointed that so many of us seem to be timid, if I may use that term, and give this Church that the Lord has permitted us to be identified with rather a casual reference. I am so proud of membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, when I think that all the blessings of the world may be

mine as a member of his Church, and if I were not a member how many blessings there may be lost for me. Think of the wonderful people in the world and in all these various churches. I want to tell you that there are thousands of them, I think I would be safe in saying millions of them who, if they knew what we know and had the testimony that God has given to us, wouldn't hesitate to join the Church. They would be afraid not to take advantage of the opportunities that he has given to us. In this wonderful conference where we have been assembled the past three days, think how we have mingled together. I have shaken hands with people all the way from Australia, to Portland, Maine, and from Europe to Hawaii, who have come here, happy to make these long journeys, delighted to be permitted to associate and to shake hands with the membership of this Church.

I feel it is a great compliment to you, my brothers and sisters, that so many of you find in the lives of one another the things that make you proud and grateful to be identified with this organization. When we think of what the Lord has done for us—think of the thousands of our young men and women who have had an education that they could obtain in no other way except in the missionary field, and that we have more than four thousand out in the world today—what a privilege it is! This is not a Church to criticize, to find fault with others. The Lord doesn't advise us or counsel us to make it uncomfortable for other people who don't understand, but the Lord in every way encourages us to set an example that others seeing our good works will be constrained to glorify his name.

GRATITUDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

I am so proud and grateful for the young people of this great organization as I meet them in different parts of the country, and I am so thankful for their fathers and mothers who have given them the training that encourages them to pray and to walk uprightly before the Lord, encourages them to avoid bad habits and not partake of things that otherwise would hurt them. Think of it. Do you realize, my brethren and sisters, that there isn't a blessing, a real blessing in any church in the world that is enjoyed in that church that you may not enjoy as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? You can't think of a thing that is worth while in preparation for eternal life that we do not have and while we are only a small organization compared with the great ones in the world, all that they have, all together, that is necessary for eternal life in the celestial kingdom, we have, *plus* the authority of our Heavenly Father and the promise of eternal happiness if we will obey his commandments.

This is not a man-made organization. It is not just a small fraternal department in this great world; this is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Think what that means, a Church of the Son of God, who gave his life that we might live again. So today as I worship here with you I am thankful for my birthright, thankful for parents

who taught me the gospel of Jesus Christ and set the example in their home. If I did anything that I should not do in my life, it would be something that I could not have learned in my mother's home. There were sweetness and kindness and love always. With a large family of children it took a mother with a good deal of patience, but she was always patient with us.

KEEPING COMMANDMENTS BRINGS JOY

It will not be very long, in the natural course of events, till the summons that took Father and Mother and other loved ones to the other side, will reach me. I look forward to that time with pleasant anticipation. I have lived a long time, as contrasted with the average of human beings, and I have had a happy life. I can think of nobody who has had a fuller life than I have had, and I don't say that boastfully, but gratefully; and I want to say to you that every happiness and every joy that has been worthy of the name has been the result of keeping the commandments of God and observing his advice and counsel. So, as we go forward, each of us, each having an influence with our neighbors and our friends, let us not be too timid. We do not need to annoy people, but let us make them feel and understand that we are interested, not in making them members of the Church for membership, but in bringing them into the Church that they may enjoy the same blessings that we enjoy.

WORLD IN CRITICAL CONDITION

This world is in a critical condition. It is a pitiable situation that faces us, and not anything in the world but the power of our Heavenly Father can preserve the civilization of our day and the people who live upon the earth at the present time. The adversary is having his innings because the people of the world have refused to listen to their Heavenly Father. Now it is our privilege, not only to set the example but also to encourage others to take advantage of it. Nobody knows, when we pick up a paper today, what the headlines may read. So many lives destroyed here, so many there, some from accident, some from warfare, some from wickedness, and the greatest destruction of all that is going on in the world today is the result of immorality. There was a time, as we have been reminded, when the people of Sodom and Gomorrah could not produce, in those two cities, ten individuals who were worthy to live. They had been so wicked that they were not fit to live any longer, and so they were consumed by fire.

Now, brethren and sisters, somebody said in this conference that the same laws apply, the same rules govern today, and it is just as necessary for us to keep the commandments of our Heavenly Father today as it was for any of the prophets of old or any of his faithful sons and daughters who have lived upon the earth, who have earned a right to a place in the celestial kingdom. We can't gain

our exaltation by the good lives of our neighbors, but we can profit by their good example, and we can improve ourselves.

With love in my heart for every one of you, may I say I am grateful. I haven't any way of expressing my thanksgiving to the people of this Church and many people out of the Church, where I have traveled in the world, for their kindnesses to me, one of the humblest of our Father's sons. I wish I could return in full measure all the good which has been done for me wherever I have been.

RICHES OF ETERNAL LIFE

And now, brothers and sisters, it is not so important how many valuables you may have, how much property you may possess, and how many of the honors of men you may acquire, and all those things that are so desirable in the world, the thing that God has given to you that is worth more than all the rest is the opportunity to obtain eternal life in the celestial kingdom and have as your companions, throughout the ages of eternity, sons and daughters, husbands and wives with whom you have associated here on earth. That is what the Lord teaches us, and when the world is so distressed and uncertain, we ought to be grateful, we ought to be thankful for our blessings. I can think of no people in the world who have so much reason to be thankful for their blessings as right here in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

BLESSINGS OF CONFERENCE

This will be the conclusion of a remarkable conference. It has been delightful to me, these wonderful choirs that have made us so happy with their singing, the fine advice and counsel that we have received from our brethren, the opportunity even to sit in the room and feel the influences that are here, because everyone who is here, I am sure, has felt as I have felt the inspiration of our Heavenly Father and the spirit of love and kindness and a determination to do better than we have ever done before.

This is God's work. It is for the salvation of all the human family if they will accept it, and we who have received it and know it is true should be ever alert and watchful to share with others the things that we know. Let our homes be the abiding place of prayer and thanksgiving and gratitude. Every day when we go out from our homes, let us leave a place that has been sanctified by the righteousness of our own lives, and when we return to it that we may feel that influence that is always there when the Spirit of God is present.

I pray that these fine boys and girls who have come to sing to us, along with the other visitors, may go home from this conference, that you may return to your various homes in safety and in peace, and take with you a renewed desire to be real members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, worthy to be called members.

Now, I pray that the Lord may add his blessing, that his peace may be upon you and in your lives, and in your home. Let us pray for the great men and women of the world who need the Lord but do not understand his interest in them. Pray for the President of the United States who, at the present time, so much needs guidance from our Heavenly Father. Pray for our representatives in Congress, our governors, our mayors of cities, the men who have influence in politics in our various communities, that they may do the things that will be better for all of us and make us happier, and please our Heavenly Father. That is our privilege. I say to you that the power of prayer is something that cannot be measured. If there were time, I could tell you many instances where prayer has been answered in a marvelous way. People have risen from beds when they have been told they could not live, that it was not possible, and yet they have lived and performed a great work. This is the kind of Church that you belong to. This is the kind of organization the Lord has offered to all people. Think of our great educational institutions, the opportunities which are given to our children to learn all that the world can teach them, plus the glorious truths that are necessary for us to absorb and make a part of our lives in order that we may gain an exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

ADMONITION TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER

God bless you, my brothers and sisters. I feel I want to be with you. I am so grateful for the privilege of being here, and now I am anxious that you may all go to your homes and carry with you love unfeigned, love for your boys and your girls, for your husbands and wives, for your neighbors and friends, and let that love abound wherever you may be. If we will do that, when the returns come from this conference and we hear from the various stakes and missions of the world, where people have gone from here, we will discover that we did receive a blessing and that the Lord did magnify us and give us our opportunities, and we will go on keeping his commandments.

I pray that every one of us will remember that to be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an honor beyond all price in comparison, and that we may so live that our neighbors and friends who know us, who may not be members of the Church, will be grateful for our fellowship. Peace be with you. May you go to your homes in peace and safety and continue to live in love and happiness as long as you are upon the earth. And when the time comes for us to depart this life, may each of us find our names recorded in the Lamb's book of life, not one missing, entitling us to an inheritance in the celestial kingdom, right here upon this earth, in the companionship of those we love, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.