

tialized beings, receiving a portion, along with him, of the great glory that he possesses.

I humbly pray that you and I will do this, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER THORPE B. ISAACSON

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

President Smith, my dear brothers and sisters, (and I can call you my dear brothers and sisters because I feel that way towards you, and I hope you feel that way toward me), I feel very humble this morning, and I can publicly admit that I have asked the Lord not once, but many times, to bless me this day while I speak to you for a few moments. I am sure that I could not occupy this position and say anything worth while without the help of the Lord, and I will be grateful to you if I can have an interest in your faith and prayers.

DEFENSE IN SPIRITUALITY

This is surely a spiritual conference, and the Spirit of the Lord is here in rich abundance. Each one of us knows that. The testimonies that we have listened to about the Prophet Joseph are true, and the words that we shall hear from your brethren will be inspired by the Lord. I hope that we can take the advice and the testimonies that will be given to us, that our minds and hearts will be open. Truly, we can rejoice in the gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

If we can live close to our Father in heaven, we can partake of his Spirit. If we get too far away from the Lord, we cannot partake of his Spirit. I have come to believe that the only defense that we can have against the spirit of the adversary or against the spirit of the devil is the Spirit of the Lord. That is truly the great defense that we can have.

May I repeat from Corinthians, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9.) As I think of that, it makes me feel that I cannot quite understand the blessings that the Lord has in store for us if we love him. They are great blessings, but, to the best of our ability, we can partake of them if we truly love the Lord. How can we love our Father in heaven? The best way, I believe, is for us to draw near to him each day of our lives, and it is good for us to study his words and his life. We have so beautifully heard this morning, "Love our Father in heaven, try to serve him and keep his commandments, and he will bless us to a greater degree than we can ever realize."

PRINCIPLE OF REPENTANCE

It may be necessary for us to make some adjustments in our lives. It may be necessary for us to overcome some things, but the Lord has promised us great blessings if we try to repent and come unto him and partake of his life and his Spirit. And what has he said about him that overcometh? In Revelation we read:

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. . . .
To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written. (Rev. 2:7, 17.)

We can come near to our Father in heaven through that great principle of prayer and repentance. We have been known as a praying people. We are glad to be known as a praying people, because we believe in prayer. We bear witness to the world that the Lord does hear and answer prayers if we ask in humility, and so we can go to the Lord each day of our lives. We do not need to worry about talking to the Lord, no matter where we are, about any of our trials and sorrows and problems, and the Lord has told us if we ask in faith, he will bless us.

PRAYER A VALUABLE HABIT

What is prayer? Someone has said, "Prayer is the most valuable habit a boy can have. It is a safeguard in youth, a comfort and a pillar of strength and power in middle life, and in old age a consolation that wipes away the sting of the grave and takes from death its victory." That is the way we can become close to our Father in heaven, yes, through the principle of prayer, and, oh, that we could keep our lines open so that we can communicate with the Lord and so that we can hear his answer.

Just a little poem on prayer:

I say a prayer each morning,
So the day will turn out right,
And when the sun has disappeared,
I tell the Lord good night.

The world looks brighter in the dawn
When I pronounce a prayer,
Because it reassures me
The Lord is really there,

And that I seem to walk with him
Each hour of the day,
While I am occupied with work
Or taking time to play.

I listen to his counsel
And find my courage strong,
Whenever I am weary
Or when anything goes wrong.

And when the day is over,
And the moon and stars are bright,
I feel the least that I can do
Is tell the Lord good night.

—*Author Unknown*

May we draw nearer to the Lord each day, thank him for the blessings that we enjoy, try to serve him and keep his commandments with all the strength that we can muster, because therein lies the happiness of life and its fulness. Without those blessings, we are not happy nor can we be successful.

GOODNESS OF THE LORD

I want to bear testimony of the goodness of the Lord to me. I am grateful for the association that I have with the brethren of the General Authorities of the Church whom I love very dearly. I want to say to the people of the Church and to the whole world that there is no disunity in the Church so far as the brethren are concerned. No greater love hath one man for another than is experienced in the associations with these men. I know they are men of God; I witness their faith each day; I know they believe in the principle of prayer; and I know they encourage the people and bless the people because they know that is the will of the Lord.

OBSERVANCE OF SABBATH DAY

With reference to the Sabbath day, I was quite astonished recently regarding the London Olympic Games of the world wherein those great games were not held on Sunday, even though many of the people of that great city wanted those games to go forward on the Sabbath day, because they could get large crowds and because the revenue would be great. But there is a law in London that says there can be no games or sports on the Sabbath day. When I read that letter and read that law and read that article that was sent to me about the Olympic Games from one of our people in London, I could not help feeling a little ashamed that here we are living right where those doctrines and principles have been given to us, and sometimes we have a hard time living the Sabbath day and keeping it holy as the Lord has told us to do. I hope that we can popularize the Sabbath day and keep it holy and truly worship the Lord with all our hearts and draw near to him so that we can partake of his Spirit and be happy in our daily life and in our homes.

I hope that our young people are not being robbed of the blessings of prayer and that we are not too busy in our daily life to call our family together, or that we will not become too self-sufficient, or too modest, or too backward, to call our family together. Even though there are only one or two home, do not

let us deny our children the blessing that comes from family prayers. Do not let us feel sufficient without the Lord's help, because it is impossible for us to succeed and reach eternal life and have joy and happiness here upon earth without those blessings that come from our kind, loving Father in heaven.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO OVERCOME MISTAKES

In closing, I would like to bear you my testimony that I know the Lord hears and answers prayers. I know that he will help his people overcome some of their weaknesses. I know that he will help them in their problems. I like to believe that I can go to my God, the Eternal Father, no matter what my problems may be, no matter how far I may have drifted. I want to feel that I can go to him, and I hope that our young people, and for that matter, all of our people, will never feel as though they can make a break with the Living God, even though they have mistakes to overcome. There is no time that we can forsake the Lord, least of all when we are weak, least of all when we are discouraged, least of all when we are disappointed, and I hope that the young people will not live with their mistakes long. I think they should be encouraged to go to the Lord as soon as they have made mistakes, and I hope we as bishops, Aaronic Priesthood advisers and advisers to adult members of the Aaronic Priesthood, can be so true with those men, yes, likewise, with all young men and young women, that if they have made mistakes or if they need help, do not let us cut them off sharp. Let us be kind and lovable to them so they can come to us with their sorrows and their mistakes and their problems, and then encourage them to go to the Lord and ask him to forgive them, and go to the Lord and ask him to help them overcome some of the things that they have done that they should not have done.

I like to believe in the law of repentance where the Lord has said in effect: "If you come unto me truly and repent of your wrongdoing, I will forgive you." I am grateful for the law of repentance; it's never too late to repent.

The Lord has never forsaken us. He has told us, "I the Lord am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D. & C. 82:10.) And in closing, may I urge that we start all over again and try not to make those mistakes. In the words of Emerson: "All that I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."

God bless you that you may enjoy the spirit of the conference, that the spirit of prayer may always be with us, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.