

PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

I hope that tonight we have all taken into our souls the instructions that have been given.

We have met here in the name of the Lord, as representatives of the Lord, holding his priesthood. We have been entitled, because of so meeting, to divine guidance. Sometimes there are occasions, and I imagine most of us have had them, when we may feel that there is a better way to do things than the way they are being done, but if we will keep the commandments of the Lord—and when I say the commandments of the Lord I refer to the Ten Commandments, and the other revelations that he has given to the children of men through the prophets—if we will observe those teachings we will not go astray. It is when we fail to keep the commandments of God that we fall into darkness.

I am grateful to be here with you. I was doubtful as to whether I should come out tonight, because I am not as strong as I would like to be. I felt however, that I could not miss being here with this body of men, and as a result I have been edified and delighted.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

I would like to re-emphasize, if it needs emphasis, the suggestion that has already been made: Read the scriptures. That is the advice of the Lord. Are you taking it? It was the Savior who said: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

It does not just say, "Read the scriptures—but, search the scriptures." What does that mean to you? To me, it means prayerfully to investigate what the Lord has said, and in that way, if we are humble we will be entitled to his guidance, and we will not be misled.

Within the last few days I received a letter from a man who was excommunicated from the Church, not because he did what the Lord wanted him to do but because he did what *he* wanted to do, and then he put the responsibility on some of the other brethren, saying that they had advised him what to do. He had forgotten that before he got into the trouble that caused him to be severed from the Church, one of the General Authorities of the Church advised him not to do the thing that he seemed intent on doing, and just as soon as he did that he was in the dark.

Keep the commandments of the Lord, brethren, and you will not wander away into darkness. There is not any time that you may not kneel down, and if you can honestly say, "Heavenly Father, I have done what you have asked me to do, and what you have directed me to do; what shall I do now?" You will get the answer, and you will not be mistaken. But if you do the things that ought not to be done and get your suggestions from the adversary of all

righteousness, you will find yourself wandering in darkness and you may lose the pearl of great price.

RIGHTS OF WIVES

I would like to emphasize tonight something that has been referred to before and that is that men, who have been married to women and have agreed before witnesses that they will keep the commandments of God and live as they should, sometimes are so selfish, so wilful, that they forget that their wives have some rights. I want to say that the priesthood does not give any man a right to abuse his wife. The priesthood does give him a right to be kind, to be faithful, to be honorable, to teach the truth and to teach his children the truth, and when he does that he will not fall away into sin. There never has been a time in the history of the world when we have needed divine guidance more than now.

Reference has been made quite plainly tonight to the fact that the Presidency of the Church, three men, have been called to perform certain duties, and, associated with them, other men have been called to assist in carrying out the program of the Church. When these three men and the others who have been called to the Quorum of the Twelve, and those who have been called into the other presiding positions among the General Authorities, are united, we need not be worried about what will happen to the Church. All men and all women have a right to inquire of their bishop, of their stake presidency and high council with regard to matters in the Church. They have a right to inquire and if they are not satisfied they have the privilege then of going beyond these men, but not very often would that be necessary if the man who is asking were in the line of his duty. So let us not forget, brethren, that we have had conferred upon us a wonderful gift, divine authority, that comes from our Heavenly Father. That is a priceless gift bestowed by the Lord. It is not like a recommendation from any other organization. It means that if we are living as we should when that authority of the priesthood is conferred upon us, we are entitled to the inspiration of the Almighty, and we will have it if we keep his commandments. So let us have our homes in order, have family prayers and ask a blessing upon the food. Let us try to learn what the Lord would have us do, not what we would like to do or somebody else would like to have us do.

ACCEPTANCE OF COUNSEL

As I stand here now I can think of a number of men that have gone to the leadership of the Church for advice and if they had taken it they would be in the Church now, but they are out. Those to whom they went had no ulterior motives; those who gave the advice when it was asked had only the desire to bless the one

who asked for it, but it was contrary to the ambition and desire of the individual, and because he was already in sin, he could not understand the counsel of the good man who unselfishly advised him what he should do.

This world is in a pitiable condition. There are hundreds of thousands of people who do not even believe in God, that is, in the God of this world, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Father of Jesus Christ, our Lord. They are in the dark. We cannot expect them to find the way of happiness until they obtain the light, and it devolves upon this great body of priesthood and those who are associated in the various stakes and wards and missions of the Church, holding the priesthood, to let our light so shine that others seeing that we are indeed servants of the Lord will be constrained to accept the Gospel and conform their lives to the truth.

Again let me plead with you, my brethren, be patient with your children. Remember that one of the greatest gifts that comes to you in life is the family that you may enjoy if you have a right to the priesthood and have received it.

INFLUENCE OF PRAYER

We will not always see alike; men will not always reason as their wives do and vice versa, but if you will pray together, with a real desire to be united, I can say to you, you will agree on all important matters.

I noticed a number of months ago up on South Temple Street this legend on a billboard: "The family that prays together stays together." I do not know who placed it there, but I want to say that if you will think about it for a moment you will know that it is true. I admonish you to pray together to the Lord, and I do not mean by that to just say prayers, I do not mean to be a phonograph and repeat something over and over again, but open your souls to the Lord as husbands and fathers in your home, and have your wives and your children join you. Have them participate. There then comes into the home an influence that you can feel when you go there. It has been a great blessing to me to be permitted to travel throughout this Church and enter the humble homes of those who dwell in them, who keep the commandments of the Lord, and to partake of the influences that I find there.

We are not any of us becoming any younger. A good many of us have passed the meridian of life. If we are going to make any corrections, any adjustments, and most of us need to make adjustments, the time to do it is now, not put it off for the future.

GRATITUDE FOR BISHOPS

I would like to urge that we go to our bishops and thank them for their faithfulness and their devotion to us. I live in a ward

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where we have three of the finest men in the world in the bishopric, wonderful, humble, prayerful men. They do not have any desire to do anything in that ward except to bless the people, and I suppose you will find that in all the wards of the Church, with few exceptions.

When we receive the priesthood, when we receive ordinations, when we are set apart to perform certain duties in the Church, by the authority of our Heavenly Father, we should realize that it is a great and wonderful blessing, and that it carries with it a tremendous responsibility. We should not treat it lightly.

We have been together two days. We have had a happy time. Other meetings will be held in this conference before it is concluded, and if we will attend those meetings with a prayer in our heart to have the Spirit of the Lord, to be guided, inspired by him in our thinking, not only in teaching but in being taught, when the conference closes we may go to our homes and take with us the inspiration of the Almighty. We can set our homes in order and we can help to keep our wards and stakes in order—but it will take work. It will take prayerful, thoughtful work.

REPENTANCE NEEDED

There are conditions in the Church that need to be repented of. Reference has been made in this conference to the fact that the sale of liquor is being legalized. Years ago the President of the Church stood in this pulpit and in a general conference and plead with the people not to abandon the Volstead Act. Legislation had been enacted making it illegal to sell liquor or to buy liquor. The Lord has advised us not to use strong drinks, and every Latter-day Saint should pay attention to the advice of our Heavenly Father in regard to that matter. Let me plead with you, search the Word of Wisdom prayerfully. Do not just read it; search it prayerfully. Discover what our Heavenly Father gave it for. He gave it to us with a promise of longer life and happiness, not if we fail to observe it, but if we observe it. Read the Word of Wisdom in the presence of your families and set the example. If we will do that Zion will continue to grow. If we will do that the Church of the Lamb of God will continue to become a power for good in the world.

It is amazing to me how many great and influential men there are in our own country who do not belong to the Church—I do not know whether they belong to any church or not—but who in their correspondence with the headquarters of the Church indicate how pleased they are at what we stand for, and we stand, I hope, always, for what the Lord would have us stand.

BLESSINGS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Brethren, it is a favor from the Lord to receive the priesthood;

it is a great privilege to represent our Heavenly Father. It is a blessing that, if we are faithful, will open the doors of the celestial kingdom and give us a place there to live throughout the ages of eternity. Do not trifle with this priceless blessing.

Bishops, let me plead with you, when you ordain young men deacons, teachers, or priests, see to it that they have it made plain to them that with that gift that comes from our Heavenly Father, there is a responsibility. If you will do that, they will grow up to be the protectors of the weaker sex, and there will be less sorrow and distress because of looseness of habits among the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father in the communities in which we live.

The Lord wants us to be happy. That is why he gave us the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is why he conferred the priesthood upon us. He wants us to have joy. That is why he organized this Church and set in it the various offices, and all these things are in order. As has been referred to tonight, by the other brethren, if you will follow the leadership of the Lord, and those whom the Lord sustains, you will not fall away into darkness, lose the light, transgress the laws of God, and forfeit your privileges that he is so anxious that all of us should enjoy.

That is my feeling tonight, brethren. I am grateful to be here. I am thankful when I have the privilege of shaking your hands, looking into your faces, and I am happy when I see you walking as the Lord would have you walk, following his advice and counsel. We will all be happy if we do that, and the world will be enriched, and the missions that have already been opened will continue to function until the people have been warned and the countries that have not yet been warned may have an opportunity yet to be taught the gospel of Jesus Christ. Among those that have not been warned are the most populous nations in the world today. But it is our responsibility to find ways and means to carry the message of life and salvation to every nation.

Thank you, brethren, for your love and for your fellowship, for your kindness and helpfulness to me and my associates who are here upon this stand. We love you. We are grateful to you and for you, and I pray that every one of us will so live that when the time comes for us to go hence and the record is opened of our lives, it will disclose the fact that we have desired with all our hearts to be what God would have us be, and we have been guided by him in paths of peace and happiness and righteousness, and when the time comes that this earth shall be cleansed and purified by fire and it becomes the celestial kingdom—that is what it will be, brethren—when that time comes I pray that we will all have so lived that we will find our names recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life, entitling us to membership here forever in the companionship of our wives and our children, and all that are

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dear to us, not one missing, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Men of the Tabernacle Choir sang: "The Lord Bless You And Keep You."

The benediction was offered by President Golden L. Woolf of the East Provo Stake.

The congregational singing of the Conference was directed by J. Spencer Cornwall, Conductor, and Richard P. Condie, Assistant Conductor of the Tabernacle Choir.

The Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir was in attendance at the Sunday sessions and furnished the choral music for those sessions. J. Spencer Cornwall directed the singing of the Choir.

The choral singing for the Monday morning and afternoon sessions was by the Ricks College Choir, under the leadership of Elder Alma Dittmer.

The Brigham Young University Mixed Chorus, Elder Franklin Madsen, Conductor, furnished the Choir singing for the Wednesday morning and afternoon meetings.

At the General Priesthood meeting the choral music was furnished by the Men of the Tabernacle Choir, Elder J. Spencer Cornwall conductor.

The music of the *Tabernacle Choir and Organ broadcast*, Sunday morning, 9:30 to 10:10, as also the music for the *Church of the Air broadcast*, was by the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir and Organ, J. Spencer Cornwall, conductor of the Choir, Frank W. Asper at the organ, the spoken word was by Richard L. Evans.

Accompaniments and interludes on the great organ were played by Alexander Schreiner, Frank W. Asper, and Roy M. Darley.

Stenographic notes of the Conference were taken by Frank W. Otterstrom and Joseph Anderson.

Joseph Anderson,
Clerk of the Conference.