

God with all our hearts, might, mind, and strength; that we might really and truly serve God in the name of Jesus Christ and love our neighbors as ourselves. This I ask in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

If I might enjoy the Spirit of the Lord to direct me for a few moments this afternoon, I would like to talk about a subject which has been discussed in all the general conferences of this Church by members of the First Presidency—in every conference, so far as I can recall.

BLESSINGS OF UNITY

I refer to the importance of unity and oneness of the Latter-day Saints.

As I have pondered the importance of this matter, I have recalled some of the blessings we could enjoy if we would be united as a people. If we would be united in paying our fast offerings and observing the law of the fast as fully as the Lord has taught it, and if we were united in carrying out the principles of the welfare program as they have been given to us by our leaders today, we would be free from want and distress and would be able fully to care for our own. Our failure to be united would be to allow our needy to become the pawns of politicians in the public mart.

If we were fully united as a people in our missionary work, we would rapidly hasten the day when the gospel would be preached to all people without and within the boundaries of the organized stakes of Zion. If we are not united, we will lose that which has been the lifeblood and which has fed and stimulated this Church for a generation.

If we were fully united in keeping the law of sacrifice and paying our tithes as we have been schooled today, we would have sufficient to build our temples, our chapels, our schools of learning. If we fail to do that, we will be in the bondage of mortgage and debt.

If we were united as a people in electing honorable men to high places in our civil government, regardless of the political party with which we have affiliation, we would be able to safeguard our communities and to preserve law and order among us. Our failure to be united means that we permit tyranny and oppression and taxation to the extent of virtual confiscation of our own property.

If we are united in supporting our own official newspapers and magazines which are owned and operated by the Church and for Church members, there will always be in this Church a sure voice to the people, but if we fail to be united in giving this support, we permit ourselves to be subject to abuse, slander, and to misrepresentation without any adequate voice of defense.

If we were united in safeguarding our youth from promiscuous associations that foster marriages out of the Church and out of the temples, by having socials and recreations as a united people, as has been the practice from our pioneer days, we would be building all our Latter-day Saint homes on a sure and happy foundation. Our failure to be united in these things will be our failure to receive eternal blessings that otherwise could be ours.

If we were united in safeguarding the Church from false doctrines and error and in standing as watchmen upon the tower as teachers and leaders in watching over the Church, then we would be free from these things that cause many to stumble and fall and lose their faith. If we are not thus united, the wolves among us will be sowing the seeds of discord, disharmony, all tending to the destruction of the flock.

If we were united in our temple work and in our genealogical research work, we would not be satisfied with the present temples only, but we would have sufficient work for temples yet to come, to the unlocking of the doors of opportunity to those beyond who are our own kin, and thus ourselves become saviors on Mount Zion. Our failure to be united will be our failure to perpetuate our family homes in the eternity. So we might multiply the blessings that could come to this people if they were fully united in the purposes of the Lord.

MASTER'S PRAYER

The importance of unity was prayed for by the Master of us all. In that last great prayer—you will recall it—he prayed:

... I come to thee, Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . .

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:11, 20-21.)

The purpose of unity in the Church has been expressed by the Lord both from a positive standpoint as herein expressed, and also in a negative way as given in a revelation at the beginning of this dispensation. The positive purpose of the unity of Saints here is clearly suggested: "that the world may know." May know what? That this is the Church and kingdom of God on the earth to whom Jesus, the Christ, was sent.

"YE ARE NOT MINE"

In the command which he gave in this dispensation, the Master again expressed this same thought from a negative view,

... be one; and if ye are not one, ye are not mine. (D. & C. 38:27.)

If we are not united, we are not his. Here unity is the test of divine ownership as thus expressed. If we would be united in

love and fellowship and harmony, this Church would convert the world, who would see in us the shining example of these qualities which evidence that divine ownership. Likewise, if in that Latter-day Saint home the husband and wife are in disharmony, bickering, and divorce is threatened, there is an evidence that one or both are not keeping the commandments of God.

If we, in our wards and our branches, are divided, and there are factions not in harmony, it is but an evidence that there is something wrong. If two persons are at variance, arguing on different points of doctrine, no reasonable, thinking persons would say that both were speaking their different opinions by the Spirit of the Lord.

In the writings of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian saints, after describing the nature of the Church as it was organized in his day, he said this organization was given for the purpose of the "perfecting of the saints, . . . till we all come in the unity of the faith." When men receive the Spirit of God by living righteously, truth and error begin to disappear.

COMMAND TO "BE ONE"

One of our early Church leaders nearly a hundred years ago made an expression with reference to this important subject in these words:

The command to "Be one" embraces all other commands. There is no law, statute, ordinance, covenant nor blessing, but what was instituted to make the Saints one. This is the ultimate end and aim of the great plan of salvation. For this, Jesus suffered and died; for this, his servants have toiled and labored day and night in our fallen world; for this, all the powers of heaven will be exerted, until Satan shall be overcome, and the earth be redeemed, and all the glorified inhabitants thereof become one. (*The Seer*, p. 289, 1854.)

If it is so important, then, that this people be a united people, we might well expect that upon this principle the powers of Satan would descend for their greatest attack. We might well expect, also, that if there be those of apostate mind among us, they would be inclined to ridicule and to scorn this principle of oneness and unity as being narrow-minded or as being unprogressive. We would likewise expect that those who are enemies would also seek to fight against that principle.

There were handed to me recently some arguments which were presented before a congressional committee in Washington, D. C., in 1888, by a former mayor of Salt Lake City, in which he said this, about this same matter. "The theocratic tenet of the Mormon Church is a great evil, and opposed to our American institutions. — "What is a theocracy?" (Then he gave his own definition.) "It is government by the priesthood through a direct authority from God. . . . The thing I wish to accomplish is to pass laws which will strike at the foundation of the theocratic system." To put his words

plainly, the thing he wished to strike at was the unity of the Latter-day Saints, who believe in a government through a direct revelation from God through his appointed agents.

PLAN FOR UNITY

The Lord has given a plan, a three-fold plan, by which this unity might be fully realized. Unity centers in heaven, even as the Master prayed, "Father, that we might be one." The Saints might become one with the Father and the Son, spiritually begotten by baptism and through the Holy Ghost even unto the renewing of their bodies as the Lord tells us, and thus ". . . become the sons of Moses and of Aaron. . . the church and kingdom, and the elect of God," (D. & C. 84:34), and thus become adopted into the holy family, the Church and kingdom of God, the Church of the Firstborn.

Then, besides those ordinances by which we are adopted into that oneness with the Father and the Son, he has given to us principles and ordinances all intended to the perfecting of his Saints, that this same unity might be realized.

Then, finally, the Lord has given this generation another principle, that through his appointed Authorities he would teach his laws and administer his ordinances, and through them he would reveal his will. On the very day this Church was organized, he made this principle clear to the Saints when he said,

Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory. (D. & C. 21:4-6.)

About a year later the Lord expressed that same thing in these words,

What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same. (*Ibid.*, 1:38.)

That is a bold doctrine, those who are not members of the Church and those who are members of the Church who have no faith may think, but I would remind all such that it is also a bold doctrine when we declare that this is the Church of Jesus Christ, the only true Church upon the earth. This could not be the Church of Jesus Christ except for that other defined principle of revelation through the prophets of the Lord.

TEST OF UNITY

May I test your unity as Latter-day Saints? Have you received a witness of the Spirit to your souls testifying that this is

the truth; that you know this is the Church and kingdom of God; that you have received by baptism and by the laying on of hands the power of the Holy Ghost by which that unity of testimony might be accomplished? Have you that testimony in your souls?

May I ask you another question? Are you living each day so to improve your lives by living the principles and ordinances of the gospel that you are moving toward that day when you will overcome all things?

Finally, do you believe that these men whom we have sustained in this conference are the men through whom the channels of communication from our Heavenly Father are open? Do you believe—as Enos, the grandson of the great prophet Lehi, declared in his writing when he said he went into the mountain and prayed and “. . . the voice of the Lord came into my mind, again saying, (Enos 1:10)—do you believe that the voice of the Lord comes into the minds of these men? If you do, then you believe what the Lord said that

Whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. (D. & C. 68:4.)

COUNSEL IN TEMPORAL AFFAIRS

Some there are who are prone to say, “We will follow their counsel in spiritual matters but not in temporal affairs. If they counsel us in other than that which pertains strictly to the spiritual welfare of the people, we will not follow them.” Have any of you ever heard such comments?

Brigham Young tells us that this subject had been discussed early in the history of this Church, and there were some, even the early bishops of the Church, who held out that the Prophet Joseph Smith should not direct them in temporal affairs. He said,

In all ages of the world that we have any knowledge of, when there was a people on the earth whom God acknowledged as his people, he has invariably dictated them in spiritual and in temporal things. This question was agitated year after year in the days of Joseph. The first two bishops in the Church—Edward Partridge was the first, I was well acquainted with him, and Newel K. Whitney was the second—questioned the propriety of Joseph having anything to do with temporal things. Joseph would argue the case with them a little, and tell them how things were, and bring up scripture to show them that it could not be otherwise—that it was impossible for the Lord to dictate people unless he dictated them in temporal affairs. . . .

There were Wm. E. McLellin, John F. Boynton, and Lyman Johnson, who belonged to the Twelve; Frederick G. Williams, second counselor to Joseph, and two-thirds of the High Council, all talking about this, and I went to the Temple and just challenged them to show wherein the Lord ever conferred upon any man in the world the power to dictate in spiritual affairs, that he did not in temporal affairs? They could not do it. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, p. 242-3.)

LOYALTY TO LEADERSHIP

As I have labored among the brethren here and have studied the history of past dispensations, I have become aware that the Lord has given tests all down through time as to this matter of loyalty to the leadership of the Church. I go back into the scriptures and follow along in such stories as David's loyalty when the king was trying to take his life. He wouldn't defile the anointed of the Lord even when he could have taken his life. I have listened to the classic stories in this dispensation about how Brigham Young was tested, how Heber C. Kimball was tested, John Taylor and Willard Richards in Carthage Jail, Zion's Camp that received a great test, and from that number were chosen the first General Authorities in this dispensation. There were others who didn't pass the test of loyalty, and they fell from their places.

I have been in a position since I came into the Council of the Twelve to observe some things among my brethren, and I want to say to you: Every man my junior in the Council of the Twelve, I have seen submitted as though by Providence, to these same tests of loyalty, and I wondered sometimes whether they were going to pass the tests. The reason they are here today is because they did, and our Father has honored them.

I have that same witness about at least two members of the assistants to the Twelve, Brother Marion G. Romney and Brother Alma Sonne, for I saw it, and I know the nature of the test, and I know how they proved themselves to be the sterling men that they are. And so God has honored them, and it is my conviction that every man who will be called to a high place in this Church will have to pass these tests not devised by human hands, by which our Father numbers them as a united group of leaders willing to follow the prophets of the Living God and be loyal and true as witnesses and exemplars of the truths they teach.

BRIGHAM YOUNG'S LOYALTY

Brigham Young in his day was invited into a group of some of those who were trying to argue against that principle of unity. After he learned that they were trying to "depose" as they said, the Prophet Joseph Smith, he stood before them and said something like this: "You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of God, but you can cut the thread which binds you to a prophet of God and sink yourselves to hell."

It was that kind of fearlessness which was manifest in him that made him the peerless leader he was to become. It is that same kind of courage, though not always popular, but the kind that has been demanded of every man whom our Father would honor with high places of leadership.

I heard President Smith, and you heard him, four years ago from this stand, after there had been some scurrilous articles writ-

ten about the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said this, and to me it was the ringing voice of a prophet speaking.

Many have belittled Joseph Smith, but those who have will be forgotten in the remains of Mother Earth, and the odor of that infamy will ever be with them; but honor, majesty, and fidelity to God exemplified by Joseph Smith and attached to his name will never die. (April Conference 1946.)

I paraphrase those words today and make them meaningful to us: "Many there are today among us who would belittle George Albert Smith, and J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and David O. McKay, but those who do will be forgotten in the remains of Mother Earth, and the odor of their infamy will ever remain with them; but honor, majesty, and fidelity to God exemplified by the First Presidency and attached to their names will never die."

God grant us the strength of living to be united with the Saints, to live the principles of the gospel, to listen to these men as the leaders among us directed by our Heavenly Father, all to the end that his full blessings might be upon his Church, I pray humbly, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.:

The Swiss-German Choir and the congregation will now sing "O Ye Mountains High." At the conclusion of this song we shall hear from President Richard L. Evans, First Council of the Seventy.

Singing by the choir and congregation, "O Ye Mountains High."

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I recall President Grant's having said many times, "That which we persist in doing becomes easy." I have presented myself many times at this pulpit these past years, and I am not aware that it has become easy—or even any easier.

In all earnestness, if speaking here today to this congregation, and to those outside, is to be less than impossibly difficult, I shall need your help and that of my Father in heaven and I earnestly hope that I may have it.

PRIVILEGE OF REPENTANCE

With Brother [Marion G.] Romney, I have been impressed that the theme of this conference has been repentance. I was much impressed with the statement he read from President Smith's opening message of two days ago; and I remember a phrase from Dr. Merrill's talk of this morning: that we shall either have repentance or slavery.