

for our own book and live as if the end might be tomorrow—and still plant cherry trees! In worrying about things that are beyond our reach, we should not overlook our opportunities with our own families and friends; in worrying about possible eventualities we should not neglect the things that need to be done here and now, and that are within our reach; the things for which we are immediately responsible; we should not neglect or present opportunities and obligations.

I should like to close with a statement of William Allen White: "I am not afraid of tomorrow, for I have seen yesterday, and I love today."

ASSURANCE OF EVERLASTING LIFE

I am grateful to my Father in heaven for the assurance in my soul that he lives and that he is mindful of his children. I am grateful for his assurance of everlasting life. It has sustained my family these past three months when two sudden deaths have fallen upon us, and we would not have been sustained except for this assurance. And I would leave with you the witness of my soul that God does live, that Jesus is the Christ, that these things to which we are committed here in this conference and in this Church are his work and are of divine origin, and that it is our responsibility to carry them forward.

May his peace be with each of us, and with our children in the perplexing problems that confront them, and give us guidance and give them guidance, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

BISHOP LeGRAND RICHARDS

Presiding Bishop of the Church

I feel humble, my brothers and sisters, as I stand here today. My heart is full of gratitude to the Lord for my membership in this Church and for my fellowship with the Saints and the brethren. To me, the conference started last Wednesday when we met with these grand mission presidents for two sessions in the temple and heard them tell of the fine work that is being accomplished in the mission fields and the wonderful spirit they have in their work. One who had just been released said, "I find it difficult to become interested in my business." Another of the presidents said, "I prayed that the Lord would let me stay a few months longer, and when my successor arrived and apologized for being late, I said, 'You don't need to apologize. You just answered my prayers.'" It is wonderful how these men can make the sacrifices they make and then feel as they feel. I felt the same when I returned from my first mission. I went into Oregon selling bonds for a company. Every home I entered, I found it difficult to offer them bonds to purchase; I wanted to offer them the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

EARTH CRAMMED WITH HEAVEN

I couldn't help thinking as I sat through these meetings: Isn't it really a pity that it is so hard for truth to get its boots on and to be able to reach the honest in heart of the earth? If they just knew what we have—if their eyes were opened to see and understand! How wonderful it would be for all of our Father's children who really want to do right, if they could know the truth, instead of having to wait, many of them, to get it, possibly, in the eternal worlds.

I thought of the words of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, when she said,

Earth's crammed with heaven,
 And every common bush afire with God;
 And only he who sees takes off his shoes;
 The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.
 —from "Aurora Leigh"

And I thought, if the world could only know how the Lord has crammed the earth with heaven, and how every common bush is afire with God, through the restoration of the gospel. We have heard it referred to here today. "A marvelous work and a wonder," and it is all of that, far beyond the ability of any man or any woman to comprehend. The greatest mission of the Latter-day Saints is to be able to understand and appreciate what the Lord has done, and then make their lives conform thereto. The Lord said, in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, that "against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things." (D. & C. 59:21.) I acknowledge the hand of God in all things. I believe that he rules in the heavens above and that he rules upon this earth. We have heard the brethren today speak of the fulfillment of prophecy, and Peter of Old said,

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:19-21.)

KINGDOM OF GOD

You heard Brother Sonne this morning read from one of the tracts that Brother Penrose wrote of how the kingdoms of this world would be destroyed. We read in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, in which he states that the kingdoms of this world should become as the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind should carry them away. We have seen them one by one being carried away. But that was not all Daniel saw.

In the more sure word of prophecy which holy men of old gave us under the inspiration and power of the Holy Ghost, he saw that the God in heaven should set up a kingdom in the last days which should never be destroyed, but like a little stone cut out of the mountains without hands, should roll forth until it should become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

One of our missionary boys preached on that theme down in Florida while I was president of the Southern States Mission, and I think that boy is in this congregation today. At the close of the meeting a minister who was present at that meeting met me at the door—I always went to the door to meet those who had honored us with their presence—and he said, “Mr. Richards, you don’t mean to tell me that you think that kingdom is the Mormon Church, do you?”

I said, “Why not?”

He said, “It couldn’t be.”

“And why couldn’t it?” I said.

He said, “You can’t have a kingdom without a king, and we haven’t any king, and so haven’t a kingdom.”

“Oh,” I said, “my friend, you did not read quite far enough. You just read the seventh chapter of Daniel, and you will see that Daniel saw one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, and unto him was given the kingdom, that all other kingdoms, powers, and dominions should serve and obey him. Now, how can the kingdom be given to him,” I asked, “when he comes in the clouds of heaven, if there is no kingdom here prepared for him? Maybe you would like to know what is going to become of that kingdom. If you will just read it, you will see that Daniel said,

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. (Daniel 7:27.)

The Saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, and as if that were not quite long enough, Daniel adds, “even for ever and ever.” (*Ibid.*, 7:18.)

PART OF KINGDOM

Now, brothers and sisters, if you can see heaven in earth, if you have eyes that see, ears that hear, hearts that understand, you know what you are a part of as members of this Church. You are a part of that great kingdom that is being established in the earth.

President John Taylor once made this statement:

We are gathered here for the express purpose of carrying out the purposes of God. The world, however, do not understand it. But I will tell you what they will do, by and by. You will see them flocking to Zion by thousands and tens of thousands, and they will say, “We don’t know anything about your religion, we don’t care much about religious matters, but you are honest and you are honorable and you are upright, and just and you have a good, just, and secure government [speaking

of the government of the Church], and we want to put ourselves under your protection for we cannot feel safe anywhere else." (*Gospel Kingdom*, pp. 71-72.)

IMPRESSIONS OF VISITORS

During the last six months I have had occasion to hear people express themselves as to how they feel about this. We were in the Hotel Utah with one of the greatest economists in the world, and after President Smith had spoken, this man stood up. He was overcome; he had to shed a few tears; then he told us that never in his life had he been in such presence or in such influence. Then he paid us some compliments about our people and said he had felt it on the street and wherever he went.

We had another great national leader here not long ago who made a similar declaration. He said, "I have to come out here in these valleys of the mountains to get inspiration," but he did not want us to tell what he had said because he has to live with those people back in the East, but he said it just the same.

A few weeks ago a lady from Orlando, Florida, came into the office of the Presidency. The receptionist called me and said that this lady would like to know something more about the Church and would I have time to interview her. Well, I had preached in Orlando, Florida, many times, and built a little chapel there, so anyone from Orlando looked good to me. I said, "Send her up." She wanted to know all about the Church. She said, "Mr. Richards, I have traveled all over the United States—I just came from California." (I would tell you what she said about California, but I used to be president of a stake down there, and so my interests there forbid.) But she said, "I don't know what it is, but I feel it everywhere I go. You are different here; you have something different here than I have felt anywhere I have been."

"Well," I said, "that is simple, we have the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

STORY OF MINISTER

If we just had eyes that could see, ears that could hear; if we could see heaven crammed into this earth in this great work that God has set his hand to do, and every common bush afire with God—we could understand the story one of the mission presidents told in the report meeting at the temple, of the missionary who called at the home of a minister. This missionary offered to leave a tract, and the minister would not accept it; so, as he left the door he put the tract in the mailbox, and when he came back the next time the minister invited him in. Now, to make the story short, what that man read impressed him, and finally he paid for the publication of a thousand copies of the Book of Mormon. He gave nine hundred of them to the missionaries and kept the other hundred for his family. When the mission president invited him to speak at

one of our conferences, he said, "Well, if you call me, I will preach what I have always preached."

The mission president said, "You preach anything you want to as long as you preach the truth."

Then he said, "Hand me your Book of Mormon." He stood up, held up that Book of Mormon before them and said, "Here is the greatest book I have ever read." Then he pledged his loyalty to the Bible, but he said, "I've got something out of this book that I haven't got out of any other book, including the Bible." That was a minister speaking.

If every minister in all the world professedly of the Christian Church could only humble himself enough to put that book to the test, we might have a great army of men all over the world bearing to their faithful people the witness of the great and mighty work the Lord has set his hand to do in this day, the new witness for the Lord Jesus Christ in the earth.

MESSAGE FROM GOD

Speaking of these marvelous things, I heard Brother Ballard make this statement when he visited our mission. He said that one of our greatest national commentators, and he told the name but I will not give it here today as it will serve the purpose without, said he was asked what message could be broadcast to the world that would be considered more valuable than any other message that could possibly be broadcast. After giving the matter some thought and consideration, he decided that to be able to say to the world over the radio that a man who had lived upon the earth and had died had returned again with a message from God would be the greatest message that could be broadcast to the world. Well, that being true, we have the greatest message, for we announce to the world that not only one man, but many men, prophets of the living God who have lived upon the earth have returned again with messages from God; not only messages, but also keys and power in order that the kingdom of God might again be established in the earth as promised by Peter when he said, that the heavens must receive the Christ until the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Do you mean to tell me that if we believe in the words of the holy prophets as I have referred to today, that we have any right to expect the Lord Jesus Christ ever to come in fulfilment of this promise made except there first be a restitution of all things? There isn't time for me to go into the restitution of all things here today. We have built a monument in the state of New York to just such an individual, to Moroni, who lived upon this continent four hundred years following the crucifixion of the Savior and returned again to deliver the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated to the Prophet Joseph Smith. There stands that majestic monument to his honor, the only one like it in all the world.

Think also of what John the Baptist brought—the Aaronic Priesthood; Peter, James, and John, the Melchizedek Priesthood; the prophets Moses, Elijah, and Elias came with the keys of their dispensations.

HOLY PRIESTHOOD

Then I am reminded of another story one of the mission presidents told in the temple last Wednesday. He took out of his pocket a letter from a minister and read it to us, in which he stated that he never believed that he did not have as much authority as any other man in the world to administer the ordinances of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ until he met the Mormon missionaries and read the Book of Mormon. Now he admitted that he had to accept baptism at the hands of the missionaries of this Church.

We have been told in this conference that we have to have the Priesthood, and I want to tell you that if the world understood and knew the value of the sealing power and ordinances of the Holy Priesthood that God has sent to us in this dispensation, it would revolutionize this whole world.

TEMPLE WORK

I have one more thought I want to leave with you in the next few minutes, and that is about this temple here, and the rest of our temples. When the corner stone of this temple was laid, Brigham Young said something like this,

We are gathered here today upon one of the most momentous occasions that this world has ever known since the foundations thereof were laid, an occasion that has caused the tongues of prophets to speak and their pens to write.

You read the words of Isaiah, where he saw the mountain of the house of the God of Jacob established in the tops of the mountains in these latter days, and he added,

All nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. (Isaiah 2:2-3.)

I want to tell you, outside of these holy temples and the sealing ordinances therein, men cannot learn fully of his ways, nor can they walk in his paths.

I have some wonderful testimonies in regard to this matter, but I will only take time to read a few words from a sermon President Woodruff delivered from this pulpit in 1898, as recorded in the conference pamphlet.

I am going to bear my testimony to this assembly, if I never do it again in my life, that those men who laid the foundation of this American government, and signed the Declaration of Independence, were the best spirits the God of heaven could find on the face of the earth. They were

choice spirits, not wicked men. General Washington and all the men that labored for the purpose were inspired of the Lord.

Another thing I am going to say here, because I have a right to say it. Every one of those men that signed the Declaration of Independence, with General Washington, called upon me as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Temple at St. George, two consecutive nights, and demanded at my hands that I should go forth and attend to the ordinances of the House of God for them. (*Conference Report* 1898, pp. 89, 90.)

I wonder what the ministers of the world would say if they only knew that this were true, and it is true. When these great men who framed the Constitution of our nation came back they were not interested in the future destiny and the development of this great land of America. They came back to request that the ordinances of the house of God be administered for them.

So I say,

Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with God;
And only he who sees takes off his shoes.
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

May God help us to see and understand his marvelous work, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.:

We will bring this great session of this Conference to a close by the Swiss-German Choir singing, "Daughter of Zion," after which the closing prayer will be offered by President John M. Russon of the Los Angeles Stake, California, and this Conference will stand adjourned until 7:00 o'clock this evening, when in accordance with the custom of the Church, the general meeting of the priesthood of the Church will be held here in the Tabernacle.

Only the priesthood are invited to be present. Persons not holding the priesthood will kindly refrain from attempting to enter the building.

That session will not be broadcast.

The session at 10:00 o'clock tomorrow morning, Sunday, will be broadcast over KSL, Salt Lake City, and by arrangement through KSL over the other stations to which you are listening. That session will also be televised over the KSL television station, channel 5.

Because the Tabernacle Choir broadcast comes from 9:30 to 10:00 o'clock tomorrow morning, those desiring to attend the broadcast must be in their seats by 9:15. As the choir may be rehearsing during the time the audience is gathering, it is necessary to request that the audience come in and take their seats quietly and refrain from making any disturbing noise of any kind during the broadcast.

The *Church of the Air* broadcast, on which President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., of the First Presidency, will be the speaker, will begin