

until one night when we were quite free in our conversation and felt we knew each other quite well, I took the liberty of rolling a cigaret. And the young man said: 'I suppose it's time that I told you about another great principle of the Latter-day Saints.' He said, 'I want to read you what we call the Word of Wisdom,' and he started to read to me. I had taken the cigaret out of my mouth and, as this young chap read this Word of Wisdom, something happened to me. I found myself trying to crush that thing in my fingers. I felt the fire once but held my nerve and kept crushing it, and I said, as now I say to you, Brother Kirkham, he spoke the truth. This boy brought me a message from God and cleared up my life."

ACCEPT OPPORTUNITIES

Well, these opportunities are also ours. Just over the fence from where we live is someone waiting to hear us speak the word. Consider the way we accept our opportunities in citizenship. Yes, I appeal to every Latter-day Saint: Vote—it's one of the high privileges of your American citizenship. Bear your testimony every opportunity that comes to you. "Stand up and be counted with the Lord."

God bless us and help us that these great hours may to us be great realities and opportunities. May it be said of us, "Much was given to you; much was expected; and you did your part." God bless us and be with us that we may make of our glorious religion a reality. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I confess, my brethren and sisters, that the call to occupy this position this afternoon is somewhat unexpected. I am to give the Church of the Air sermon next Sunday morning. It was intimated that because of that appointment I would not be asked to speak from this stand. So I have no special message in my heart. I suppose I'll have to depend upon the Lord. That is good practice for Latter-day Saints.

I am always happy to bear my testimony to my brethren and sisters that this is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I rejoice in it; I know it to be true. The truth of it has lightened my life and has given happiness to me and to my family. That I can say always to my brethren and my sisters.

YEAR OF ANNIVERSARIES

This has been a year of anniversaries. A short time ago, within the last few weeks, the President of the Church went to Hawaii to celebrate the coming of the gospel to those islands one hundred years ago. You have read of what happened there. He mentioned it briefly himself this morning in his address.

It is also a hundred years ago since the gospel was brought to the foreign-speaking lands of Europe. Up to that time we had only once attempted to preach the gospel in foreign tongues, namely in the South Sea Islands. But a hundred years ago the missionaries sent out by the First Presidency of that day entered the Scandinavian and other countries of Europe and bore witness of the restoration of the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. They made notable progress at that time, a progress which has resulted in a large influx of men and women, faithful men and women, to the valleys of the mountains here.

SCANDINAVIAN CELEBRATION

It was my privilege to be sent to Scandinavia a few months ago to take part in the celebration which the Saints of those countries were holding and enjoying, because of the great anniversary. I visited the three Scandinavian countries. I was given the privilege primarily, I suppose, because I am able to speak a little of the tongues of those countries. I visited Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in addition to stopping briefly in England. I came back feeling thrilled with the manner in which the gospel had developed and spread from the humble beginnings of a hundred years ago in those countries. You know, of course, that here in these valleys, among the stakes and wards of Zion, the blood of those countries through intermarriage has spread until a large proportion of our people here carry some of that blood.

The brethren and sisters of the Scandinavian countries had planned large celebrations. I was able to attend fully the ones in Stockholm, Sweden, and in Oslo, Norway. They were carefully laid out after the pattern that had been planned for our celebration here at home and were splendidly rendered, fully as well as the celebration here at home. I missed the beginning of the celebration in Denmark because of my hurried call and trip, but later on I met with the Danes and enjoyed their company and partook of their spirit and learned of the excellence of their celebration.

GOSPEL CHANGES MEN

It was interesting to me to note how the gospel changes the very nature of men and women, and how faithful and devoted men and women may become to the cause of truth once it sinks into their hearts.

Norway is a long country, nearly a thousand miles long. Up in the icy north, we have two or three branches, one very recently established, and I was pleased to find in Oslo, which is nearly at the south end of the country, people who had come from the far north to celebrate and to thank the Lord for the coming of the gospel to their land. The same happened in Sweden; also in Denmark, which is a small country. All had a very large representation of their

Church members in attendance at the celebrations. There was a spirit of faith and devotion like that we have here today. Many people had traveled hundreds of miles to sit by one another in meetings like this and to listen to discourses on the simple principles of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was interesting to note, also, how men grow and develop under the influence of the gospel spirit. Let a very humble man be touched by the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he becomes transformed. He is no more the same man, no longer the same person. He has changed completely. I am reminded of the statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith at one time, when talking about the children of Abraham; he said that any person who accepts the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes of the seed of Abraham. A subtle change occurs in the very physical system of the man, which makes him indeed one who belongs to the family of Abraham, the family of the faithful. This notable change I observed a good many times on this trip to Scandinavia this summer, that men are transformed for the better, their powers multiplied, their vision increased, their understanding and comprehension brought out in new forms so much more vigorously because of the gospel which they have received, because of the truths of the gospel. I am happy to bear this record to my brethren and sisters at this conference.

GREETINGS FROM EUROPEAN SAINTS

I am very happy also to bring you the greetings of the people, our brethren and sisters of the covenant, of the faraway missions in Europe. They send their greetings to you and their blessings also, and their blessings are quite worth while for they come from common sources. They love you, they watch you; they follow you; they try to emulate and to imitate that which you do here.

MEETING IN OSLO

Some years ago, I have forgotten just how many, I had the privilege to go to Oslo, the capital of Norway, with President David O. McKay and Elder Reed Smoot. The three of us came into the city rather late in the afternoon. I think two of us at least were unannounced. Perhaps Brother McKay was announced, the president then of the European Mission, I am not sure about that. But we made our way at once to the meeting place of the Latter-day Saints. I shall never forget that meeting. We were not expected by the members present. The meeting was composed of the people, the men and women, who had been called to labor as missionaries in the city of Oslo. It was a report meeting. One after another the people, young and old, got up and gave a report of what they had done. I recall one elderly lady who said that she hesitated to make her report, for it was such a poor report. She had only had time during the last month to bring the gospel to two hundred different homes. I thrilled

as I thought of the faith of that woman, the strength of her faith; and how many of us fail to appreciate what we have received as she did appreciate it. Many go by day after day, having received the great gift of the eternal gospel, the greatest of all gifts, but forgetting to pay back to the Lord as he would like us to do a part of our time and strength and power to assist in the advancement of the great kingdom of God here upon this earth. I am sure that good sister received the gift of joy from her labors.

There is much I might tell you even after a brief trip to Scandinavia this summer about the conditions of the people. They are faithful Latter-day Saints, second to none in the wards of Zion. I just touched old London for a few days and found it the same wonderful old London, in the same condition as of the past. The people there, our people, are reported to be faithful and true to their covenants with the Lord, through their baptism into the Church.

WORLDWIDE MESSAGE

I would like to say, before I close this brief report, that I was greatly thrilled this morning as I heard Brother Cowley give his report, and added to that we have heard from Brother Kirkham a few moments ago. The message of the Church is not to the valleys of the mountains alone. It is not to be confined in these valleys surrounded by these everlasting hills. We have a worldwide message. Our army of missionaries, five thousand eight hundred strong as was reported this morning, implies our belief in the spread of the gospel over the whole earth. The Lord has said himself that every ear shall hear the gospel in these latter days. That means not only the ears of the people who are here in this beautiful, blessed land of America, but far beyond over the seas, on the islands, everywhere, the gospel has been preached and must continue to be taught. And we're doing this sacred work to the best of our ability. As we do that and continue to do it, the Lord will bless us and magnify us and make us powerful and strong, acceptable to him. Let us never forget the worldwide nature of our obligations before the Lord. Our missionary system must be cherished and be kept alive constantly and forever, until that last great day comes and the Lord says that the work is done.

WE HAVE THE TRUTH

My brethren and sisters, I bear you again my testimony that I know this to be the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the truth. As Brigham Young used to say, "Men ask me what the gospel of Jesus Christ is, what name does it bear? And I say to you, its name might well be truth." We and the Church, if we are faithful, as we have been taught this morning by the President, the prophet of the Lord, shall conquer. We cannot fail. Truth is never defeated. It blesses all who possess it. We have the truth. If we will keep the truth and if

we cherish it and practise it in our lives, then victory over error will be ours from the smallest household in Zion to the farthest outpost of Zion, wherever that may be. Thus through the restoration of the gospel in our day, the whole world shall be blessed.

May the Lord bless us and fill us with an understanding of this mighty work laid out for us in these latter days and make us able to do the Lord's work, which we can do if we are faithful, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers and the congregation sang the hymn, "Praise to the Man."

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I earnestly pray, my brothers and sisters, that while I stand here the Spirit of the Lord will be with me because indeed it is a frightening thing to stand before so many people, and I realize my great need of help.

PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

I have missed in this conference the genial presence of President George F. Richards. I would like you to know that I, as one of the members of his Council, was very, very grateful for the privilege of serving under his leadership. I regard him as a truly great man—a great soul—a great leader. I am sure that no one had a more firm faith in the Almighty than did President Richards. I am sure that he was an inspired man of God, and I would like to say to you that I, along with the other members of the Council, loved that man deeply; and today, together with the rest of you, I miss his presence here.

STORY OF A FRIEND

I would like to tell you a story about a friend of mine whom I shall call Bill, for the sake of anonymity. During Bill's last year at school, he met a lovely young woman named Helen. They became very good friends, and it wasn't very long until they began to talk about the possibility of their getting married.

During that same last year of school Bill fell in with a group of fellows who were known as the most popular group on the campus. They taught Bill some bad habits.

When Helen first saw Bill with a cigaret in his mouth, it nearly broke her heart. She talked with him and pleaded with him, but he felt that smoking cigarets was one of the things that went with the popularity of this group on the campus. So her pleadings brought no results. Helen began to wonder if she should stay with Bill or