

have and are, and for all that we enjoy, in this the kingdom of God, I humbly pray, and I bear fervent testimony to you to the truth of the words that have been spoken at this conference, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President George Albert Smith:

Brother Ezra Taft Benson, of the Council of the Twelve, has just addressed us and we will now join the Tabernacle Choir in singing "High On The Mountain Top," conducted by Elder Richard P. Condie.

After the singing we will hear from Bishop LeGrand Richards, Presiding Bishop of the Church, and one of the members of the family of the man about whom so many have spoken so affectionately here today, President George F. Richards.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn "High On The Mountain Top."

BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS

Presiding Bishop

My brothers and sisters, from the depths of my soul I thank the Lord for the privilege of being here to worship with you in the sessions of this conference. I think of the words of the Master when he was tempted to turn the stone into bread to prove that he was the Son of God. He replied, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4.) And I am sure we have been fed the bread of life eternal during the sessions of this conference.

APPRECIATION OF FATHER

President Smith has already indicated that I am a son of George F. Richards. I would like to take this occasion, representing his family, to express appreciation to those who have paid tribute to Father during the sessions of this conference and the many, many friends who have written their tributes since Father's passing away. Many have said that they thought he was one of the finest men that ever lived. As his son, I would like to tell you that I don't know of any man that I think lived nearer the Lord than my father. When he spoke in prayer, he just talked to the Lord. And when he made a promise to me, it was just the same as if the Lord had made it. He has left us a great heritage and a great responsibility, and I hope his posterity will not fail him.

I should like also to mention Brother Roscoe Eardley. Brother Roscoe and I had much in common. We each filled two missions in Holland; we each presided over that mission. Roscoe was a great

missionary, and the Dutch people loved him. He loved the Church, and he was loyal to it in every way. I also worked side by side with Brother Frank Evans in the Church offices, and I think he was one of the grandest men it has ever been my privilege to know. And I thank God for the presence of Brother Thomas E. McKay in this meeting. We have been praying for you, Brother McKay, for months, and we thank the Lord that you are here to worship with us on this occasion.

FAITH COMMENDED

While riding to my conference a week ago last Saturday, one of my companions said, "Bishop, what do the Saints need to be told more than anything else?" I answered, "The one thing they ought to be told is how wonderful they are in the payment of their tithes and their offerings, in helping to build meetinghouses, in sending their boys into the mission field, in helping with the great welfare program of the Church, in the buying of projects and helping with the budget, in maintaining their wards, and in the other things they have been asked to help with, such as the Primary Children's hospital, the Relief Society building, and the BYU fieldhouse." I tell you, my heart goes out in admiration, in thanksgiving to God for the faith of the Latter-day Saints, and I love them. For over twelve years now I have had to do with the financial affairs of this Church, and we haven't passed one year that the Saints haven't paid a greater tithing than the year before. We are already way ahead this year over last year. I don't think they are making undue sacrifices, because of the faith I have that every effort they put forth in the building up of the kingdom of God shall be in the words of the prophet, as bread cast upon the water which after many days shall return.

When I was a boy, my father said, "My son, there is no organization or corporation or institution in this world that will pay you as great dividends on the investment of your time and your talents and your means as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." After nearly fifty years since my father made me that promise, I stand before you to say that I have seen it verified in the lives of the Latter-day Saints and the lives of my own family, and of my own loved ones. And so I say, God bless the Saints for their faith and for their integrity.

SACRIFICES OF SAINTS

Brother Benson has just talked of the marvelous sacrifices being made to carry on the great missionary work of the Church; then there is the building of meetinghouses. We have about four hundred of them in the course of construction at the present time, and the way the Saints sacrifice in order to raise their portion of the money, to me, is a marvelous thing. My daughter called me a few nights ago after I had retired. She said, "Daddy, I was afraid you were in bed, but we just came from our ward, and we raised tonight fifteen thou-

sand dollars to make the final payment on our meetinghouse." And she added, "To cap the climax, the bishop gave another thousand." I say God bless the Saints and leaders like that.

This same daughter was sent out to collect money. She went into the home of one student. He'd given his part, but they had to have more. The building cost more than they had anticipated, He said, "Well, now, I don't know where I can get it tonight, but give me a few days; come back again." He gathered up his books that he had finished using at school and took them to the university and sold them to get money to pay another contribution on the meetinghouse.

Sister Richards and I were in Idaho a few weeks ago to dedicate a meetinghouse. When we heard the stories of those Saints, how they had sacrificed, we were thrilled. One good sister told how she had taken her cow and had it killed and cut up, and had stood on the street corner of the little town selling beef sandwiches in order to raise her portion for that meetinghouse. There isn't time to tell you more of these stories. But I do want to say that just as long as the Lord will keep putting that kind of faith in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, you just can't stop the kingdom from growing. No power under heaven can do it. And I thank God for your faith.

SPIRIT OF DARKNESS

Now, as I love the Saints for their faithfulness, I also feel remorse and sorrow for those who fail to have that kind of faith, for those who are not willing to do their part, for those who have discontinued attending their meetings. Brigham Young said that when we fail to attend our sacrament meetings and observe our prayers, the Spirit of the Lord will withdraw himself, and a spirit of darkness will come over us. Now there are a great many people in our midst who have ceased attending their meetings, and who do not observe their prayers. Some of them are near to us, some of them are dear to us, but the Lord does withdraw his Spirit. Just within the last week I had a woman in my office who told me how her husband had quit doing his duty and how the Lord had withdrawn his Spirit. She said, "Sometimes I think he is almost possessed of the devil." Well, the Lord knew that we could not be disobedient to his commandments and still enjoy his Spirit. I want to read the twelfth verse of the ninety-fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

If you keep not my commandments, the love of the Father shall not continue with you, therefore, you shall walk in darkness.

And when people walk in darkness, they cannot love the brethren; they cannot love the Lord; they cannot love the people; they cannot love this great Latter-day cause, the greatest movement the world has ever known, aside from the great atonement of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. At least that is my appraisal of it. I think that is what the Lord had in mind when he said in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

But behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen.

They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day. (D. & C. 95:5-6.)

The noonday is the brightest period of the day, and with all this glorious truth about us, some walk in darkness.

LORD'S SPIRIT WITHDRAWN

When the Lord has withdrawn his Spirit, and one walks in darkness, he says: "Well, I'm not religious."

We represent the adult group of the Aaronic Priesthood, many of whom are indifferent. One good brother wrote in and inquired: "How can a man effect a complete annihilation of his soul and his body?" Why, because he has not observed the commandments of God. He was not attending his meetings. He was not praying; so the Spirit of the Lord withdrew and left him walking in darkness; and when a man walks in darkness, he has little hope to look forward to.

When a man says he is not religious, does he mean that he believes that when he dies that will end it all? In the words of the Savior, speaking of the days of Noah, he said: "They shall say, come, let us eat, drink, and make merry, for tomorrow we die." Does it mean that he believes that will end it all? Paul said that "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (I Cor. 15:19.) And the Savior said,

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:36-37.)

Oh, I tell you, brothers and sisters, the glorious gospel that we have is worth more than all the wealth in the world.

MEANING OF RELIGION

When a man says he is not religious, does he mean that he would not be interested if religion could tell him where he came from, why he is here, and where he is going? Does he mean that he is not interested in these things, when he says he is not religious? Suppose you had never seen your own father, and yet you had had communications from him from Europe or elsewhere, and he had been kind to you, but conditions hadn't been such that you could visit him. Wouldn't you want to see your own father? Wouldn't you some day want to be acquainted with him and enjoy his association?

Paul tells us that

... we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9.)

When religion can teach us that we are the very offspring of God the Eternal Father, how could any of us not look forward longingly to the day when he will take us by the hand and say, ". . . Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Matt. 25:21.)

ADDED UPON

If what we read in the Pearl of Great Price is true, that those who were faithful in keeping their first estate should be added upon, (and there isn't time to discuss how marvelously those who have kept their first estate have been added upon) but that more blessed is he who keeps his second estate, for he shall be added upon forever and forever, does a man mean when he says, "I am not religious," that he would not like to be added upon forever and forever? There is an eternal life, and we have that right awaiting us if we will just live for it.

Does a man mean, when he says he is not religious, that he does not care whether his wife and his children belong to him throughout the countless ages of eternity, that they mean nothing to him?

I was in the Arizona Temple not so long ago. We spent a day there, and the Primary teachers of one of the wards brought their children to do baptismal work for the dead. While the children were doing this work, we held a testimony meeting with the teachers, and in that meeting sister after sister stood up (their husbands were not active in the Church), and with tears in their eyes, they bore their testimonies and said that the greatest desire of their hearts was for the day to come when their husbands could take them into the temple of God and be sealed to them for time and all eternity, that they might have claim on them and their children.

Do we mean when we say we are not religious that we do not care anything about such matters?

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

How are we going to find out these things? You remember the story of the rich man and Lazarus, how Lazarus died and was received into Abraham's bosom and the rich man into torment. He called to father Abraham and said: "Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Father Abraham explained that there was a gulf between them. Then the rich man's thoughts turned to his five brothers who were still upon the earth, and he said, "I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

"For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

Abraham saith unto him, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."

And the rich man said: "Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."

Father Abraham said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (See Luke 16:22-31.)

I pray that God will put it into the hearts of our loved ones and those of the Saints of Zion who are not as faithful as they should be, who do not think they are religious, that they will realize that we do not only have Moses and the prophets, but also the living prophets of God who are sent to show us the way; that they will listen unto them. When I think of all the Lord has revealed in the establishment of his Church and kingdom on the earth in these later days, to me it is all Isaiah described it to be when he said the Lord would proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder, and the wisdom of their wise men should perish, and the understanding of their prudent men should be hid. God help us to touch the hearts of those who cannot see and who are walking in darkness, and God bless you faithful Latter-day Saints for your integrity and your devotion to his great cause, I humbly pray in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

You have just listened to the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, LeGrand Richards, and while he has been talking, I have been thinking of this great audience. Reference has been made repeatedly to missionary work. We have been told that we have nearly six thousand missionaries out in the world today. Of course they are coming and going all the time. For a small church, such as we are, having membership a little more than a million, approximately six thousand missionaries is a marvelous record. As I sit here looking at the faces of the men and women that I know here, and I can see people here from all over, it came into my mind to ask the question: How many of you have filled a two-year or longer mission during your lifetime? Raise your hands. Thank you very much. This is a missionary Church. Sometimes people might think, from the way we refer to finance, that we are a bank, but we are not. Think of the buildings that are on this block, every one of them built many years ago. This tabernacle and the temple were built in the very poverty of our people when they were trying to make homes here in the valleys of these mountains. But the Lord said, "Seek ye first,"—not last—" . . . seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.)