

This is the sixth session, therefore, of the One Hundred Twenty-second Semi-annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. These services will be broadcast in the Assembly Hall and Barratt Hall over a loud-speaking system, and by television. The proceedings of this session will be broadcast over Station KSL, and by arrangement through KSL over the stations named in the first session of the conference.

This session will also be televised over the KSL television station, channel 5.

The choir singing for this morning's session of the conference will be by the Tabernacle Choir, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting, and Frank W. Asper at the organ.

We shall begin the services by the congregation and the Tabernacle Choir singing: "For the Strength of the Hills," conducted by Richard P. Condie, assistant Tabernacle Choir director.

The opening prayer will be offered by Elijah Allen, formerly president of the California Mission.

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The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "For the Strength of the Hills."

Elder Elijah Allen offered the opening prayer.

Following the prayer, the Tabernacle Choir sang: "Behold A Host."

### PRESIDENT STEPHEN L RICHARDS

*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

*"Up, awake, ye defenders of Zion!  
The foe's at the door of your homes;  
Let each heart be the heart of a lion,  
Unyielding and proud as he roams."*

These are the opening lines of a militant hymn by the late Charles W. Penrose, written on the occasion of a great threatening danger to the communities of the Latter-day Saints during their early establishment in the valleys of these mountains. The foe was an army, with a mission inimical to the liberties, the interests, and the aspirations of the people. This clarion call, which but echoed the proclamations of the leaders, electrified the people. "To a man" they responded to their various assignments. There is no record of any dissension. The defenders saved Zion.

#### CHALLENGING CALL

I believe, my brethren and sisters, in the Restored Church of our Lord, that it is within the proprieties and the urgent needs of

the hour to issue another such challenging call today. I would not welcome the charge of "alarmist," but I would endure it if I thought such a militant call would arouse our people to a state of alarm over the ominous conditions which threaten us.

"The foe at the door of our homes" is not an army of marching men with military equipment, as it was nearly a hundred years ago. And the homes to be defended are not the houses in which we dwell.

The foe today is far less tangible and discernible. He is widely diffused and insidious. His methods are multiple, and it is much more difficult to prepare for defense, for the foe of the present-day attacks both within and without the Church.

If in the time allotted to me in this great conference, I can add anything, however small, to the admonitions of my brethren, which may serve to alert our people to dangers confronting them, I shall be extremely grateful to my Father in heaven.

#### ZION AND THE WORLD

I repeat, the foe of today assumes many forms. I think, however, they may be generally classified under the caption, "Aping the Ways of the World." I know of few more salutary things for a Latter-day Saint than constantly to bear in mind the distinction between Zion and the world. Both terms are somewhat confusing because they are used with varying meanings and applications. Both have geographical application, and both have theological and moral import.

For my purpose here today, I shall look upon Zion as being a condition and not a place, and the world likewise. ". . . verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion,—the pure in heart." (D. C. 97:21.)

There is no fence around Zion or the world, but to one of discernment, they are separated more completely than if each were surrounded with high unscalable walls. Their underlying concepts, philosophies, and purposes are at complete variance one with the other. The philosophy of the world is self-sufficient, egotistical, materialistic, and skeptical. The philosophy of Zion is humility, not servility, but a willing recognition of the sovereignty of God and dependence on his providence.

#### A PRINCIPLE OF STRENGTH

The critics of Zion mistake humility for weakness. In their ignorance or shortsightedness they have failed to observe that generally speaking, the humble of the earth have been its greatest benefactors, in science, in statesmanship, and in great movements for the elevation of humanity, foremost among all being the Author of humility, our Lord and Savior. It is sometimes difficult to com-

prehend how humility can be a principle of strength and power, and why the great victories of life have gone to the humble.

I think the explanation is this: The self-sufficient are not in a position to call to their aid the one greatest and most effective force in the world—the Spirit of God. The humble depend upon this power; it does not fail them. The battles for righteousness and liberty which is a divine endowment can always be won if those who wage the war are worthy of victory. This is the explanation and the lesson which, more than any other, the world needs today.

I feel hesitant to say it, but I am constrained to make the assertion, even though it may seem highly presumptuous to many who hear it, that the Restored Church of our Lord, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is in better position, is more specifically charged with the responsibility, and has greater revealed knowledge than any other institution to teach to the world this one vital lesson it so sorely needs.

In making this statement I intend no disparagement of the righteous and pure in heart of the world. I have not time to try to define their relationship to the Zion of the kingdom. They will receive the Lord's compensation for their own goodness, and lasting gratitude for their contribution to the welfare of mankind.

We can effectively bring this lesson to the world only as we build up Zion and protect her from her foes. I propose to enumerate, with your indulgence, and I hope not offensively, some of the attacks which the subtle and insidious foe, coming from the world and its philosophy and practices, is making against Zion.

#### ATTACKS UPON THE HOME

I shall begin with the home, the most fundamental institution in our society. The foe is attacking our divinely-given concept that marriage is an eternal compact between a priest and a priestess of the Most High, charged with the sacred mission of bringing children into the world, and then guiding them safely back into the presence of God, whence their spirits came. President Clark gave us a most illuminating and impressive discourse on that subject yesterday. The fulfilment of this mission involves sacrifice. The ever-growing practice of the world would eliminate that sacrifice.

It would emancipate women (I think that is what they call it). It wouldn't have them stay home as much as they have in the past. It would have them better educated in general culture and in civic responsibilities, which sounds very good and seems highly desirable, except for one serious flaw in the program.

This worldly practice in many instances takes a woman out of her home so much of the time, and absorbs her attention to such an extent, that she cannot and does not give to her family the loving, patient, intelligent care which they so much deserve and need. There are mothers whose club work has ostensibly been devoted

to social improvement, whose very offspring have been the problems of the society they seek to serve.

There are other more frivolous distractions drawing mothers away from their homes. These are justified by the allegation that mothers need more relaxation and more freedom from the responsibilities of home. We grant that such allegations must be true with women who have never discovered the art of happy, contented living in their homes and with their families. In Zion we say to mothers, it's true, you need some diversion. Even though you love your home life, a respite from your work and cares is desirable.

The Church presents many opportunities for your service in social, educational, charitable, missionary, and recreational fields. You will find more lasting happiness and satisfaction in a Relief Society meeting than in a bridge club; and generally speaking, your social diversions had better be had in company with your husband. The world is making butterflies out of women and a prison out of home.

#### CURTAILMENT OF FAMILIES

Perhaps the most serious aspect of this attack of the foe being made on our homes is in the arbitrary curtailment of the size of families. The proponents of this worldly doctrine grow bolder and bolder every year. They claim support from mathematical prognostications as to the increasing demands of populations, and the limited supply of the earth's sustenance. They claim improvement of the race by its limitation. They have been making these claims for many years, and they have won many adherents to their cause, especially among the so-called intelligentsia of the world.

For the most part the world has been under the leadership of this birth-restricting intelligentsia for many years. And where are we? We have more physical comfort, more education perhaps. Do we have better government? Are we making more progress in developing the Christian virtues among men? Do we have more brotherhood, peace, and unselfishness?

I doubt if there exists in all the world any place or institution comparable to a big family for the inculcation of the principle of unselfishness and mutual consideration, the high qualities of character so indispensable in the solution of the world's problems. I know there are bad big families and bad small families; but take it by and large, I would assume that there is a thousand percent better chance of a great leader in a good cause coming from a family of ten than from a family of one.

Now, if I am not careful, I will be debating this issue. I don't want to do this, first, because I am sure I am not fortified with all the arguments, and I might get bested, depending on who the judges are; and second, because we of Zion do not have to debate this issue. We know of the doctrine that emanates from the revelations of the Lord.

We know that he has commanded the replenishment of the earth from the homes of his people, as President Clark said yesterday. The Lord pity those who subject themselves to his rebuke for denying entrance to the spirit children whom he would send into mortality, and the Lord pity those sophisticated couples who would pervert the sacred institution of marriage into an arrangement for social convenience and selfish personal gratification.

#### SYMPATHY FOR PARENTS

Now, fathers and mothers of the Church, some will conclude after hearing these comments that I am without sympathy for the sacrifice mothers make, and for the hardships put upon fathers in rearing a family in these oppressive economic times. Those who so conclude are partly right and partly wrong. I don't have too much sympathy for a father, a Latter-day Saint father, who decides that a baby cannot come into the home until a ten or fifteen thousand dollar house has been built and furnished, and the money is in the bank to pay expenses, and who will let his wife go to work to bring about this so-called economic security. I don't have too much sympathy for Latter-day Saint couples who do not have faith that if they do God's will, he will bless them.

I do have sympathy, however, for all parents in these days in the Herculean effort required to keep children in the paths of virtue and truth. I have sympathy for the endurance, the sleepless nights of excruciating anxiety of parents who don't know where their children are and what they are doing; and my heart bleeds for the innocent ones who are the victims of disgrace brought upon their families by the sins of the wayward.

I am persuaded, my brethren and sisters, that there is no remedial measure which offers more promise in the alleviation of domestic distress as affecting husband and wife, and parents and children than the firm establishment of the sacred and religious character of family life, marriage in the Church and in the temple; and, as a necessary adjunct thereto, the reestablishment of the God-given principle of sacrifice in discharging parental and filial obligations.

We want to relieve mother of drudgery. If I could, I would put a dishwasher in every home, but good mothers and good fathers, with the vision of home vouchsafed to them in the restored gospel, don't want to be relieved of the obligation to expend their strength and energies, and to give their lives for God's children entrusted to their care.

#### ATTACK ON MORAL PURITY

There is another threat to Zion perhaps transcending all others in serious import. It is the attack of the foe on our traditional concept and standard of personal moral purity. This attack is so

evil and so repugnant to our sense of decency and virtue that I will not discuss it in this reverential presence.

I must content myself with the prayer that God, who sees our need, will come to our rescue, and that he will arouse the mighty power of Zion against this devastating enemy, that every man, woman, and child among us may be fortified with the armor of righteousness and virtue, that the offenders may be rebuked, and repent in sackcloth and ashes; and that the watchmen on the towers, the officers and the priesthood of the Church, may be alerted to the enemy, discharge their solemn duties, and protect us.

I have taken so much time in the endeavor to point out what we have to fear in the encroachment of worldly concepts and practices on home life and virtue that there is little time remaining for me to mention other aspects of great dangers confronting us. I trust, however, that the serious nature of these items will warrant a brief consideration of them.

#### CRITICISM OF UNITY

The foe is attacking our unity. We in Zion have enjoyed a most uncommon reputation for unity of purpose and achievement. This has come about because it has ever been our disposition to follow and yield obedience to our leaders. Our critics, who have not understood our concepts, who have observed our unanimous voting in sustaining officers, and other evidences of our concerted action, have called it blind obedience, induced by some sort of fear or other compulsion.

I haven't time to analyze and point out the false premise of this criticism, but I flatly deny its validity. The obedience we render is voluntary and not blind, but intelligent; and the unity we manifest arises out of a common understanding of our purposes and a common devotion to their achievement. We seek for and enjoy the influence of the Holy Spirit, which, in the larger aspects of life, motivates us all alike. Our unanimity is in response to that Spirit.

That condition is not generally prevalent in the world. Division, divided views, and debate thereon are commended. Perhaps when people don't know where they are going and have no defined objectives, criticism and debate are commendable. Men and women within and without the Church fail to observe this distinction. They want to debate our objectives. They have forgotten that they are divinely set for us and beyond debate. They seem to think our unity belittles us. This is a worldly doctrine. It has no place in Zion.

A threat to our unity derives from unseemly personal antagonisms developed in partisan political controversy. The Church, while reserving the right to advocate principles of good government underlying equity, justice, and liberty, the political integrity of

officials, and the active participation of its members, and the fulfillment of their obligations in civic affairs, exercises no constraint on the freedom of individuals to make their own choices and affiliations. I am authorized by President McKay to say that any man who makes representation to the contrary does so without authority and justification in fact.

#### FAIRNESS IN POLITICAL VIEWS

It is reasonable to assume that men may entertain honest differences of opinions with reference to governmental policy. In America, and in many other countries, an orderly system has been devised for the determination of issues arising out of such differences. With such methods available, why should any men, particularly those in the brotherhood of Zion, permit themselves to entertain personal animosities against their opponents. There is surely nothing Christian in impugning motives merely because of a difference of opinion.

I hope with all my heart that men of the priesthood, of the same quorum perhaps, and women of the sisterhood of the Church will not permit themselves to be estranged in any degree by these considerations, and that they will always subordinate such differences and their own personal ambitions to the achievement of the lofty and exalted goal to which they have pledged their eternal allegiance—the building of the kingdom of God.

I have been going about this Church for nearly thirty-five years, filling assignments to instal officers in stakes and wards and missions, and I have never yet asked a single person about his politics, and in very few instances have I ever had any knowledge on the subject. I think my own experience has been comparable to that of my brethren. We have been fair with you, my fellow members of the Church. Now we ask you to be fair with each other.

#### THREAT OF INDIFFERENCE

Perhaps the greatest threat to both our unity and our progress in Zion is that of indifference and neglect. These deficiencies are not new. They have existed in some degree throughout our history. I am forced to believe that they have increased as a deterrent force in recent years. I believe also that this regrettable indifference to duty and opportunity is in large measure ascribable to "aping the ways of the world."

A man of the priesthood, we will say, is associated in business, in club life, and in other capacities, with a man of the world. This man may be his neighbor. He sees his neighbor on a Sunday morning out on the porch smoking his pipe and reading the newspaper, or he sees him go off to a golf game, or on a fishing trip. It all looks relaxing and pleasant to him, and then he forgets who he is

and where he is. He forgets that he has been commissioned as a servant of God, and he forgets that he is in Zion; and forgetting, he steps out of Zion into the world, not all in one step, sometimes so gradually that the change is almost imperceptible to him, and he is loath to acknowledge his new status. He persuades himself that this comfortable, easy life is very enjoyable.

Then he goes farther—farther than he intended. He succumbs to many practices he once abhorred. He stops paying tithing, and the twinges of conscience he once had about forsaking duty gradually subside. He is comfortably out of Zion. After awhile he comes to the realization that his growing sons are disposed to ape his own practices, as he does those of the world.

He also begins to realize that his dear, devoted wife is suffering great disappointment. She sets great store by the promises made at their marriage and realizes that the eternal blessings are obtainable only through the faithfulness of herself and her man. She sees him losing his priesthood through neglect. It saddens her, and if his conscience is not too deadened, he perceives her sorrow. He has the power to change, to gladden the hearts of his wife and children, but he lacks courage and resolution.

The worldly habits have fastened themselves with a hundred tentacles into his very soul. He cannot throw them off. He despairs; and then one day something touches him—a death, a tragedy, a friend, his bishop perhaps, or quorum president, or a missionary. Finally the light that he had lost is re-kindled in him. The Spirit again comes to dwell within him. In penitence and humility he cries out, "O God, forgive me for my neglect." Thank the Lord there is forgiveness and mercy for those who repent, and surpassing joy in the reclamation of those who have strayed. Let no man among us be ashamed of his priesthood. Nothing greater will ever come into his life.

#### DISPARAGEMENT OF ORTHODOXY

One more item and I shall conclude. There is a worldly threat to our theological teaching and to the faith of youth. Sporadically it has always been so, but in recent years it is more pronounced. This is not a frontal attack by the foe. We have never had too much difficulty in meeting open charges or criticisms. The foe is striking from ambush, with snipers and fifth columnists, with traps for the unwary.

A part of the propaganda is that there is no warrant for official interpretation of the doctrines and standards of the Church, that everyone may read and interpret for himself, and adopt only so much of the doctrine as he chooses, and that he may classify the revelations as essential or non-essential. These propagandists are either ignorant of or ignore the Lord's declaration that "no prophecy



of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (II Peter 1:20.) They disparage orthodoxy as such and pride themselves on liberal thinking. Many of them maintain their loyalty to the Church, and some may honestly believe they are doing the Church a favor and a service in advocating their so-called broad-minded concepts.

Unfortunately, some people within the Church subscribing to these views do not realize that they are falling into a trap themselves. They are giving aid and comfort to the foe; they are undermining their own testimonies and those of others. I warn the Church against them, and I warn them against themselves; and I plead with them to desist, to abandon their agnostic discussions, and to join with the faithful in promoting the cause which in their hearts they once loved, and I think they still love.

#### ATTACKS ON JOSEPH SMITH

Not a few of these snipers delight to take a shot at Joseph Smith. In some surprising way it has become somewhat popular, stimulated, I presume, by books which have been written for students and scholars, to undertake exhaustive research into the life of this great man. In some instances, perhaps, the purpose of the research projects may be laudable, to exploit the great and noble things in the life and works of the Prophet, but in all too many instances I fear the purpose of the research is merely exploratory, with the hope of discovering something that would make for sensational reading and perhaps a profit for the writer. I have never been able to discover any very substantial reason for these researches other than that I have just mentioned.

Here is a life recently lived. Many of us here in this assembly today have known and talked with persons who knew the Prophet, and yet you would think from the way the researchers go after him that he was a person of great antiquity, and that something in the nature of excavation for prehistoric materials had to be undertaken to discover the facts of his life. I doubt if there is a person who has lived in the last two centuries whose life is more fully documented than that of this man, unless perchance it be among royalty or those in high public office.

Almost every important event in his life has been recorded by himself, by his mother, and by those who immediately knew him. His life is not a mystery; it is an open book, at least to members of the Church who have access to the knowledge which he brought to the world.

I rebuke the members of the Church who cast aspersion upon the honored name of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and who in any manner disparage his noble work. By so doing they destroy faith, their own and that of others, and the Lord will hold them accountable.

## TESTIMONY OF DIVINE MISSION

I repeat what I have said in this pulpit before: My grandfather was the close friend and companion of this man. He knew him as intimately as one man may know another. He had abundant opportunity to detect any flaws in his character and discover any deceit in his work. He found none, and he has left his testimony to his family and to all the world that this man was true, that he was divinely commissioned for the work he had to do, and that he gave his life to the fulfilment of his mission. I have complete assurance that Willard Richards did not lie about his friend, and on my own account, independent of my grandfather's testimony, borne out of the spirit within me, I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Living God, and the work he was instrumental in setting up in the earth is the veritable kingdom of our Father in heaven.

Having that knowledge and a deep reverence for his illustrious name, I deplore and resent the miserable attempts made to discredit him; and I predict that they will all come to nought, that he will survive every attack, that he will yet win the esteem and respect of all good men, and that the Father has already glorified him.

## PRESERVATION OF ZION

If I have been able in any degree to clarify our understanding about Zion and her relationship to the world, if the Spirit of the Lord has entered into your hearts, my brethren and sisters, to give you a greater love for Zion and awake within you a keener apprehension of the dangers which the foe has brought to our very doors, and if resolution shall now grip your hearts to arise and defend Zion, I will be profoundly grateful. And some day the righteous of the world will be grateful, for "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" (Matt. 5:13.)

O God, help us, thy favored children, to preserve Zion, I humbly pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## PRESIDENT JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*President of the Council of the Twelve*

With the help of the Lord, which I seek, and your faith and prayers, I shall try not to trespass too far upon the excellent remarks that we have heard by others in this conference. But I have been impressed with the thought of saying something in addition to what has been said in relation to the sacred and holy covenant of marriage.

## MISUNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURES

There is plenty that can be said, I think, without my crossing the lines and necessarily repeating. The Lord never intended, never