

# EIGHTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS  
CHRIST OF LATTER-  
DAY SAINTS



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**ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS.**

Faithful continuance in righteous living essential to salvation—Obedience to the law of tithing enjoined—Need for missionary work among the Saints at home.

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” So said the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians. The Latter-day Saints have hope in Christ beyond this life; yea an assurance that through Him we will live again; that is to say, we will be resurrected after death, as He was resurrected; and not only this, but we have hope in Christ and an assurance that we will be saved and exalted through Him, by keeping His laws and commandments. I think the Latter-day Saints understand, too, for they have been well taught, that this does not mean merely the accepting of the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel, but that we be true and faithful in keeping all of the commandments, obeying all of the laws, and that we continue, faithful unto the end. We preach the Gospel in the world, and tell the people that something more than faith is necessary to salvation. His commandments must be obeyed. I have thought that we have need, my brethren and sisters, of being taught at home that faith alone is not all that is necessary to salvation, there are so many of our people who seem to be satisfied with only their faith, and the acceptance of the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel. There are many, who have never had sufficient faith to live the laws of the Lord, making them worthy to go up to the temple and receive the higher ordinances and greater blessings which are in store for the faithful.

One of the laws which the Lord has given us, and which is necessary for the salvation of His children and for the welfare of His work, is the law of tithing. There are many thousands of Latter-day Saints who have been true and faithful in observing this law, who pay their tithing regularly, faithfully and fully. There are others, counted by the thousands—twenty-two thousand, to be more definite, in the Church, who have had means which should have been tithed, and they have not paid a cent of tithing during the past year. They have been moving along, recognized as members of the Church, but they are not doing their full duty. They are wanting in faith to do the works which are necessary to salvation. It is our hope in Christ that we will obtain salvation and eternal life by doing these things which He has commanded us to do, things which are right for us to do. Who will say that it is not right for every member of the Church, according to his financial strength, to aid in the building up of the kingdom with his finances; and is not that what the Lord has required in this law? He does not ask one to do that which he cannot do. There is no one asked to pay a dollar's tithing until he has received ten dollars; or ten cents tithing until he has received a dollar to be tithed. If we would pay our tithing as we receive our income, or interest, we would always have something to pay as tithing. Who will pretend to say that it is not a just law? If this kingdom were on wheels, and it were possible for the Latter-day Saints to roll it forth by pushing and pulling, would we expect of the physically weak man or woman to push or pull as much as the one who is physically

strong? Why, certainly not. A little child ought to comprehend that principle. Of course, where much is given much is expected.

I would ask you, brethren and sisters of the Church, if a person, being a member of any organization which is effected for the common good of its members, is considered a good member of that organization, if he will not do his part in carrying it on? If finances are necessary he will be expected to do his part in a financial way. What of those who would reap the benefits of the organization, and refuse to do their part in maintaining it? I say, the law of tithing is a just, and righteous law of God, it is our Father's provision for the carrying on of His work, in large measure, and His distribution of the financial responsibility of it, among His sons and daughters who have covenanted to obey Him. Now, since we have twenty-two thousand men and women who have means which should be tithed, and who refuse to pay their tithing, and who otherwise manifest their religious indifference, we have need of work at home as well as abroad.

There are two great arms, at least, to this work, and the responsibility which rests upon us as Latter-day Saints, is the preaching of the Gospel to the nations of the earth, and the preaching of the Gospel to the people at home. The Lord said to His Prophet Ezekiel:

"I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel," as we elders are watchmen. "When a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine

hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man that the righteous sin not and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezek. 3:20, 21.)

There are men and women who have at some time repented of their sins, who made a good beginning, in this work, in embracing the Gospel, who have departed from their righteous ways, and are going into spiritual darkness, and it is for us to care properly for these people. I am asked, by stake presidents, when I go into their stakes, "What can we do to get these, our brethren and sisters whose names are on the non-tithe payers' list, to pay their tithing?" I have had to say, "I suppose that they are not able to take meat; they need milk; we will have to begin over again and convert them by preaching to them the first principles of the Gospel, and, when they get sufficient faith, then we may hope that they will live this and other laws."

The non-observance of this principle of tithing is only one of the indications that there is need of constant labor at home in the stakes and wards of Zion. For instance, according to the reports which we have, there are in the stakes of the Church, a population of 372,000, and according to the statistics, only about fifty per cent of these men, women and children attend a religious meeting upon the Sabbath day, including the Sunday School. Where are the 186,000 every Sabbath day, who ought to be worshipping the Lord? Isn't there something for us to do? Of the 92,000 male members who hold the Priesthood in this Church, we are told that 29,000 of them are inactive; that 27,000 of them, during the year

1914, did not attend a single quorum meeting. Is there not something for us to do?

The hope we have in Christ, my brethren and sisters, is that we will obtain salvation, not by neglecting these duties, not by disregarding the commandments of the Lord, but by being true and faithful in keeping them all, and in laboring for the salvation of others. I feel that it is true religion and undefiled that we minister to the souls of men, for their salvation, at home as well as abroad, and in this ministry we establish ourselves in the faith, and anchor our souls in salvation.

The Lord bless these hundreds and thousands of faithful workers in the Church, that they may be untiring, and the Lord bless those who are wanting in faith, and help them to keep His commandments, continuing faithful unto the end, that they may receive salvation through Christ, our Savior, I pray. Amen.

#### ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH, JR.

A summary of belief in doctrines of the Gospel—Temple ordinances essential to exaltation, for living and dead—Duty of Church members to love one another, and help all mankind.

It is always a pleasure to me to hear the Gospel preached, and to listen to the testimonies of the elders of Israel, for I accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness as it has been revealed in these latter days. I believe absolutely in the great atonement of the Son of God. I accept Him as the only begotten Son of the Father, who came into the world to atone for sin and to give to the world life, that we might have it more abundantly. I believe in the

Gospel of the resurrection of the dead, and that all men shall come forth from the grave in a literal resurrection, a uniting of body and spirit, never more to be separated. I believe that the just will be exalted to thrones and powers and principalities in the kingdom of God, and that every man shall receive a reward according to his works. I believe in the doctrine of repentance from sin; that it is necessary for all men to repent. I accept the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, by immersion in water, the ordinance being performed by one having authority to administer in the name of the Lord. I believe in the doctrine of laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which we are brought into communion with our Father in heaven and learn of His ways, that we may walk in His paths. I firmly believe in the doctrine of revelation and inspiration; the privilege of man to communicate, under proper conditions and circumstances, with the Lord. I believe in the principle of prayer, and that no man can come unto God without he has in his heart the spirit of prayer, by which he communicates with the Father. I believe in the salvation of the human family, and that it is the intention and desire of the Lord to save all His children, with the exception of a very few who will not be saved, who reject salvation against themselves because of their utter wickedness and sinning against the light. I believe the Gospel is universal, and it is not merely for the handful of people known as Latter-day Saints, but that the Lord desires to save all men, and eventually will save all through their acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and obedience to His laws, with the excep-