

Ninety-First
Annual Conference
of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints



*Held in the Tabernacle and Assembly Hall
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With a Full Report of the Discourses*

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This is the reservation, that is the proviso. Now if we shall attain to these great blessings we must be humble, faithful, consistent Latter-day Saints.

SOME PERTINENT QUESTIONS TO THOSE WHO HOLD THE PRIESTHOOD.

Now, brethren and sisters—and I say sisters because, as I have said, the sisters participate in the blessings of the Priesthood through their husbands—do we appreciate the Priesthood of God, this divine authority? Do we honor it in our lives? Do we honor it in our file leaders? Do we teach our boys at home the importance and value of the Priesthood? Are they receiving this instruction in the various organizations? Because, I take it that the Priesthood of God is about the greatest gift unto man, for it represents divine authority. Let us give heed to this matter. Oh, I pray that the responsibility of it may rest down mightily upon the authorities in the stakes of Zion, and that they will see to it that proper and full instruction is given in respect to this matter.

Now may the Lord bless you, the Lord bless our President, who has spoken so beautifully and so powerfully to us today, and Presidents Penrose and Ivins. We have had rich instructions already. Oh, if we could only fully receive it into our hearts, and carry it out in our lives, how blest we would be! May the spirit of the Lord continue to be upon this people and in the congregations of the Saints, and may it rest upon the authorities of the Church, and all the speakers at this Conference, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

I have rejoiced with you, my brethren and sisters, in this general conference as far as it has progressed. I feel in my soul to endorse what has been said. I feel that the Spirit of the Lord is with us, and was with us very richly in the opening session. I desire to contribute something, through the help of the Lord, that will be of profit to some of us, if we will listen and hear, and be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.

EVIDENCES OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE SAINTS.

The key-word of our Conference, six months ago, was given us by President Grant, to keep the commandments of the Lord. If I understand the key-word given to us in this Conference, it is to continue our faithfulness in keeping the commandments of the Lord. We have abundance of evidence of faithfulness on the part of the great majority of the Latter-day Saints. The very fact that, under existing financial conditions, the tithing of the people has increased, during the past

year, is an evidence of their faithfulness in keeping the commandments. The reports we have of the increased attendance at sacrament meetings and of stake conference meetings is an additional evidence of faithfulness on the part of the people in keeping the commandments of the Lord; also, the increased attendance and membership in the auxiliary associations of the Church, is an evidence of faithfulness on the part of the young as well as the older people of the Church. I have the utmost confidence in the Latter-day Saints including Zion's young people. I have the utmost confidence in the ultimate triumph of God's work in the earth. No power can stay the progress. Zion is to arise and shine and become the glory of the whole earth, and we can see her brightness already. Those who are not of us, and among us, and those of the world whose eyes have been turned toward us, are also mindful of this fact. A friendly feeling toward the Latter-day Saints and the doctrines which we have for the world is growing up wherever the gospel is being preached. There are, of course, some exceptions. In our travels in the Stakes of Zion we have abundance of evidence of devotion on the part of leading men and women to their callings in this great work. I feel in my heart to commend them for their faithfulness and for their devotion and to pray God's choicest blessings to rest upon them, that they may be abundantly rewarded of him in time and in eternity for the sacrifices which they are making, of time and means, in the carrying on this great latter-day work. These matters of which I have been speaking, of which we know by records which are kept and reports which are made, indicate to me that the Latter-day Saints are making improvement in other ways, where we are unable to check them up so completely as on some of these matters, such as attendance at meetings and the payment of their tithes and offerings. The tithing is an index of the faithfulness of the individual. I am sure that the Lord manifests his pleasure to the individual who is making the required sacrifice for the onward progress of his work, and for the salvation of his children and such is the character and the work being done by the Latter-day Saints.

CARING FOR THE FATHERLESS, AND KEEPING OURSELVES UNSPOTTED
FROM THE WORLD.

The Apostle James said: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

We should not overlook this latter part of the definition. I believe that the Latter-day Saints are improving in that respect in keeping themselves unspotted from the sins of the world. We are visiting the widows and the fatherless, we are feeding the hungry; we are clothing the naked; we are visiting the sick and the afflicted; and we are taking care of the stranger and feeding him the bread of life, as opportunity is afforded. I do believe, Latter-day Saints, that when we pay our

tithing in full, conscientiously before the Lord, and are generous in the giving of our offerings, that we are answering the requirement of the law, and there will be none to suffer. The widow and the orphan will be well taken care of in the Church, if we all attend to these particular duties in faithfulness; and the Lord will reward us amply for our efforts and our sacrifices in this direction. I believe that the people today, the Latter-day Saints, answer the call to leave their homes and go into the nations of the earth to preach the gospel among strangers as readily as they ever have done, notwithstanding the individual expense of the elders is almost double what it was a few years ago. This is another evidence of faithfulness which inspires confidence in the Latter-day Saints. It is the young people in the main—our sons and our daughters, who are called to bear this responsibility and to make this sacrifice. They are answering the calls in a generous and satisfactory manner and the Lord takes these weak men and women and with them threshes the nations, and the wisdom of the wise does perish before their humble, truthful testimonies.

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIN OF NEGLECT.

This is the time, my brethren and sisters, for our planting, this period of our eternal progression, while we are here in mortal life. If in the season of the planting of our crop, the planting be neglected, there will be no time of reaping. I do hope that we will bear this thought in mind and make every preparation that is necessary while we are here and have the opportunity; that when we go beyond we will find peace, we will be satisfied with that which we have to reap as a result of our life's work here. The Savior gave us a parable that is very impressive upon this point—at least to my mind. It refers to the rich man who dressed in fine apparel and fared sumptuous every day. The poor man lay at the gate of the rich man; the dogs licked his sores, and he fain would have taken the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. After a time the poor man died, and the angels bore his spirit to the paradise of heaven. The rich man died also, and went to hell; and in hell he lifted up his eyes in torment. Seeing Lazarus afar off and in Abraham's bosom he cried to Abraham: "Father Abraham, send Lazarus that he may dip his finger in water and touch my parched tongue, for I am in torment." You know the answer. That was impossible. Then the next request was to send Lazarus or somebody else from the dead, that they might go down to earth and visit his five brothers that they might be specially warned that they might not come to his fate. But that was impossible. The answer was: "They have Moses and the prophets. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one were sent from the dead." There are several important lessons to be learned from this parable; but the one I wish to bring to your attention is the serious consequence of the sin of neglect. There does not seem to have been any other charge made against this

rich man than that he had the means to do with, the opportunity was laid before him, his responsibility he clearly saw, and ignored it.

OUR DUTY TO FEED THE SPIRIT AS WELL AS THE BODY.

Now it is a blessing to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked. That is a part of pure religion and undefiled; but I have thought and I do feel, my brethren and sisters, that it is better to feed the soul of a man or woman than to feed the body, to minister unto their spiritual and eternal needs and welfare rather than to their physical. The body must perish soon anyway. There are those among us who are starving for the word of God. They are wandering from sea to sea, and from the north even unto the east, running to and fro, seeking the word of God and cannot find it. They do not hope to find it among the Latter-day Saints. They are blinded to the truth which we have received, but we know we have received the responsibility to preach it in all the world as a witness unto all nations before the end shall come. This is the food of which the world of mankind are so much in need today, and with which we are so bountifully blest. It is that kind of food that we can give to those who are in need, generously, and they become the happy recipients and are blest through it, and we will not be impoverished. Indeed, as we undertake to minister unto the spiritual needs of men and women, our souls grow and enlarge, our love for our fellow men increases; our love for our Father in heaven and our Savior increases; our love and appreciation of the truth also increase, and we are even more blest than they. The very anticipation and desire to do good brings happiness and peace to our souls. On the other hand, if we, having the abundance of this spiritual food, and knowing those about us who are in a starving condition, if we fail to minister unto their needs we are likely to experience in the life beyond, a disappointment corresponding with that of the rich man who neglected to minister unto the needs of his poor neighbor. As it is more blessed to feed the soul, so is it a greater neglect, a greater sin, and I believe will be attended by a greater penalty to neglect to feed the souls of men and women.

NOW IS OUR OPPORTUNITY TO BLESS BOTH THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

The work for our dead, brethren and sisters, we have not been organized in the past to do, as we have been organized, as a Church, to preach the gospel abroad. We have been left to our individual initiative largely, in this matter of searching for the genealogies of our ancestors and going up to the temples of the Lord and doing the work for them. This responsibility rests heavily upon us, and some of us do not realize it. If we neglect our dead, when we go to the other side, they will reproach us, and that will be hell and torment. We may desire to come back to have another opportunity, but it will not be afforded us. Now is the time; this is our opportunity to bless mankind, both the living and the dead, and to prepare an eternity beyond

that will be one of peace, contentment and all that our hearts can desire.

In conclusion, let me recite you a few lines impressive of this principle. It is entitled "A Little Parable," and reads like this:

"I made the cross myself, whose weight was later laid on me,
This thought is torture as I climb up life's steep Calvary.
To think my own hands drove the nails!
I sang a merry song,
And chose the heaviest wood I had,
To make it firm and strong.

If I had guessed,
If I had dreamed its weight was made for me,
I would have made a lighter cross to bear up Calvary."

May the Lord add his blessings, I pray in Jesus name, Amen.

The Elite Male Quartet sang, "Jesus, I my cross have taken."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

You perhaps have noticed from the announcement in the paper, that Elder Whitney will go to Europe to preside over the European mission, succeeding Elder George Albert Smith; so this will probably be the last time that we can hear from Brother Whitney for some months at least.

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

For the past fifteen years I have been preaching the Gospel in the Stakes of Zion, and after living on "stakes" all that length of time, I need, and it seems I am to have, a change of diet. If you wish to know how I feel about the call that has come to me, I will tell you: I rejoice in it. I am going with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance to do my duty—as I have done it here—on the other side of the world.

EARLY MISSIONS AND APPOINTMENTS.

This will not be my first mission as an Elder of the Church. My first mission of all was to the United States, from 1876 to 1878. I labored five or six months in Pennsylvania, and then went to Ohio, my father's native State, where the Whitney family embraced the Gospel in early days. While I was in Ohio my mother wrote to me asking why I did not return. Said she: "All the missionaries who went with you, or went at the same time that you did, are back home. Why don't you come?" I answered: "Because I have not been re-