

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH

Annual
Conference

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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With Report of Discourses



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ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Notwithstanding the anxiety I felt in having to address this large congregation, I am very happy today; happy in my religion, having an absolute assurance of its truth, without any harassing doubts or fears. For this assurance and testimony, I am grateful beyond my power to express.

"DOERS OF THE WORD, NOT HEARERS ONLY"

I should like, if possible, to say something on this occasion, in a very brief talk, that would stimulate faith and religious activity to some degree in the lives of the Latter-day Saints. As a people we are well taught in matters pertaining to our religion. What we most need is to be impressed with the necessity of doing as well as we know, of being "doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving ourselves." If we were to do as well as we know, our salvation would be secure. I desire particularly at this time to emphasize the importance of observing the law of tithing, and the generous giving of fast offerings, as a potent factor in the scheme of man's salvation, and in support of the Church, and the work it is designed to accomplish. There is today an emergency in the land, a wide spread financial depression; and the Church feels it keenly. Many of its members are without employment or other means of support and are dependent upon the Government, the Church, or other charitable institutions for a subsistence for themselves and their families. The Church Authorities are concerned over this unfortunate condition. They would like to care for the faithful members who are in need of financial assistance; but how this may be accomplished is a question which is giving them no little anxiety.

The Lord has made provision in his Church to meet every emergency that might arise, provided, the members will do their part. If all the members had paid their fast offerings and their tithes in full since becoming members of the Church, there would have been sufficient means in the storehouse of the Lord to meet this oppressive emergency.

AN EXAMPLE OF LOYALTY AND FAITHFULNESS

There was a serious emergency, of a financial character, existing in the Church when Lorenzo Snow came to be its president. The properties and moneys of the Church had been escheated and taken over by the United States Government, making it necessary for the Church to borrow large sums of money, and later to bond the Church for means with which to carry on its current work. In due time these obligations had to be met. President Snow, acting under the inspiration of the Lord, and of his high calling, took with him certain members of the First Presidency and of the Twelve and, by team, went to St. George, and from there traveled north through Utah and into Idaho, holding meetings in

the settlements on the way, appealing to the Saints to come to the relief of the Church in its time of financial distress by the faithful payment of their tithes and offerings. The people responded to the appeal to that extent that the bonds and other indebtedness of the Church were soon paid off and the Church was once more free from debt.

OUR INDEBTEDNESS TO THE LORD

If all the Saints of today were to pay a just and full tithe of their increase, and be liberal in the payment of their fast offerings, which we plead with them to do, the Church would be able to care for its needy members, that none would have to suffer.

The Saints living in the days of President Snow set a good example of loyalty to Church authority and of obedience to the law of tithing. We should be as loyal and as faithful as were our forebears. Such faithfulness makes for individual salvation and the welfare and progress of the work of the Lord.

The Lord expects every member of his Church to do and to give for the carrying on of his work, according to the individual's ability and his means. Those who neglect to do their part will meet with serious disappointment in the end.

A record of what tithing we have paid is kept in heaven, also of what we should have paid. The difference represents our indebtedness to the Lord. We should make the ledger to balance before finishing this life's labors.

WORKING FOR THE LORD

There are in the Church many business men and men of professions who have become spiritually inactive, their entire time being devoted to their business or profession. They could pay their tithing and by so doing be rendering valuable aid to every division of the work for which tithing is used.

The Lord needs us in his work, and he needs our tithes and offerings; and we need him every hour.

The Lord had a job for me
 But I had so much to do
 I said, You get somebody else
 Or wait till I get through.
 I don't know how the Lord came out,
 No doubt he got along
 But I felt rather sneaking like,
 I knew I'd done God wrong.

One day I needed the Lord—
 Needed him right away;
 But he never answered me at all,
 And I could hear him saying
 Down in my accusing heart,
 Child, I've too much to do.
 You get somebody else,
 Or wait till I get through.

Now when the Lord has a job for me,
 I never try to shirk,
 I drop what I have in hand,
 And do the Lord's good work.
 And my affairs may run along
 Or wait till I get through.
 Nobody else can do the work
 God has laid out for you.

WE ARE HERE FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE

A story is told of a young man who was very desirous of getting an education. His parents were unable to send him to college, so he walked to the college city, and, after diligent inquiry, succeeded in finding a place where by chopping wood he could pay his board and lodgings. Later one of the college professors gave him a job cutting wood to pay for his tuition. Others, learning of his success as a wood chopper, employed him to chop wood for them. He soon found that he had no time to go to college, and he became content with his success as a wood chopper. This represents a condition which obtains with many of us.

We came to earth for a specific purpose—that of working out our own salvation, or in other words to prepare for the life which is to come, which is everlasting. Some of us seem to have forgotten the purpose we had in view, and to have become content with our search for the wealth and fame this life affords,—in other words, content with “chopping wood.”

FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN

One might ask: Why all the activity we see in the Church, in the ministry abroad, in the ministry at home, in the stakes and wards, in the priesthood quorums and auxiliary associations, in genealogy and temple work, in Church school and seminary work, etc.? The answer might be briefly given thus: The salvation of man depends upon it. It is the work and glory of God to accomplish the salvation of his children, by the plan of the Gospel which he has revealed. The religious activities seen in the Church and in which we are engaged are for the purpose, and are assisting the Lord in the noblest work, the most important service in which man may be engaged. If we be not called officially into the service, there are many things we can do of our own volition which will contribute to our own happiness and salvation and to the happiness and salvation of others. Napoleon Hill says: “Render some useful service each day, for which you do not expect any pay. This will bring you happiness such as people who work for pay only, never enjoy.”

A FULNESS OF JOY

In II Nephi 2:25 we read, “Adam fell that men might be; and men are that they might have joy.” To receive a fulness of joy here and hereafter, as intended of the Lord, we must live the righteous Christ-like life;

and render effectual service to God and to our fellow men. The righteous life inspires love of God and of fellow men and opens the avenue of communication and help from the Lord, which is so necessary to success in effectual service.

HAPPINESS THROUGH OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD

Another potent means of assisting the Church and the work of the Lord, and which is conducive to individual happiness and salvation, is to obey the word of the Lord wherein he has expressed his will by direct revelation, that we abstain from the excessive use of meat, and from the use of tea, coffee, tobacco and all intoxicating drinks. If the Latter-day Saints were to strictly observe this one revelation, as interpreted by the Church authorities, they would be a healthier, happier, and a more prosperous people than they are today. They would have more money with which to pay their debts, and for tithes and offerings. The money paid for tea, coffee, tobacco and liquors goes, for the most part, out of the country I understand; and it means a tremendous drain which is felt directly or indirectly by a large percentage of the people. From every viewpoint it is unprofitable to violate the Word of Wisdom or any other word of the Lord. "Obedience is better than sacrifice; to hearken than the fat of rams."

I have tried in a brief way to emphasize the importance of paying an honest tithing and of being liberal in the giving of our offerings; also, of rendering acceptable service to God and to our fellowmen. It is important, also that we keep all the commandments of the Lord, and faithfully do his will in all things. May the Lord help us so to do.

ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

Of the First Council of the Seventy

Yesterday we listened to the members of the Presidency of the Church preaching, over a great broadcast, the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the children of men. The extent to which their words reached I am not prepared to say, but as far as the broadcasting system carried, those who were able to listen heard the Gospel message. To me it was a wonderful thing and I am sure that all those who are here attending this conference must have been convinced that the Lord is continuing to build constructively in the earth and that his Church is making progress and is growing rapidly.

I think that not before have the songs of Zion been sung by the entire congregation from this building over the broadcasting system of the nation. This Tabernacle is naturally made for such an event. I almost wish that I could have heard the rendition from some far distant point, for the thousands of voices must have gone over the air with fine effect.

When Brigham Young, under the direction of the Lord, planned this