

*One Hundred Eighteenth*

ANNUAL

CONFERENCE

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



Held in the Tabernacle  
Salt Lake City, Utah

*April 4, 5 and 6, 1948*

With Report of Discourses



Published by the  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Printed in the United States of America

salvation to all those who believe and obey it, and I bear that witness in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

#### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

President Smith has given us a brief history of the Church and the Latter-day Saints up to the present time. We are on the road toward perfection but we haven't reached that point yet. This house is filled to overflowing, many people standing for want of places to sit. The Assembly Hall, no doubt, is filled likewise as are other places where the Saints are gathered, and many thousands of the Latter-day Saints are listening in their own homes this morning. I am sure.

I feel greatly honored to be asked to speak at this meeting following the President. I feel that I have a message to deliver to the Latter-day Saints, those who shall hear my voice and others who may read later my discourse. If only the Latter-day Saints hearing what I have to suggest, the counsel and advice I may have to give, would respond to the same I would be one of the happiest men alive. It is more than I can expect, but some hearts, I hope, will be touched. What I have to say, the subject I intend to speak upon to me is a vital subject for Latter-day Saints.

#### A GOSPEL OF SACRIFICE

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.)

In this we see the sacrifice made for us by the Father and the Son, the greatest ever made—a manifestation of love with which there can be no comparison.

The gospel we have received is a gospel of sacrifice and self denial from beginning to end.

The Lord has said:

Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again.

And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple. (D. & C. 103:27, 28.)

#### THE LAW OF THE TITHE

One of the greatest sacrifices that God has required of us as members of his Church is that contained in the law of the tithe.

On July 8, 1838, the Lord gave to the Church a revelation on the subject of tithing, in which he requires of the members of his Church that they pay one-tenth of all their interests annually. This is the revenue law of the Church. It is used in promoting its financial interests; in the Church educational system; in the building and maintaining of temples; in building houses of worship in wards, stakes, and

missions; in caring for the poor; and in the missionary work of the Church.

Many thousands of Latter-day Saints comply faithfully and fully with this religious obligation and by so doing are assisting in the accomplishments for which the tithes of the Church are used; and they will in no wise lose their reward.

There are some members of the Church who might profit by the experience of Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, of the Primitive Church, and not withhold any of the Lord's portion.

When we are through with this life and go hence, we will have no means with which to balance our tithing account. Realizing then our dilemma, we may, like Dives of old, desire that someone be sent from the dead to warn those we love, that they may not make the same mistake; in which event we may be told:

... They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. (Luke 16:29.)

And behold, all things are written by the Father; therefore out of the books which shall be written shall the world be judged. (III Nephi 27:26.)

The records kept by the Father will be a correct and true record. They will show what we should have paid in tithing each year, and what we did pay. Any difference or balance will show our true standing on the observance of the law of tithing.

#### AN ACCOUNTING OF STEWARDSHIP

All that we possess of this world's goods has been given to us of the Lord, and we are to be regarded as but stewards over what we have received. We will have to give an accounting for our stewardship. In view of what the Lord has done for us, and given unto us, it is a small thing that he has asked of us in return, that we give to him one-tenth of what he has given to us. We have accepted the gospel as a gospel of sacrifice and self-abnegation. The Lord has said:

And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple. (D. & C. 103:28.)

If we are not willing to lay down our lives for Christ's sake and his gospel's sake, we may not hope to receive the salvation which is God's greatest gift to man, and for which we have enlisted in his cause to obtain. The Lord knows the intents of the hearts of the children of men. He knows whether or not we are willing to lay down our lives for the cause of the Master. Is it possible that we are willing to lay down our lives for the gospel's sake, and that we are unwilling to give to the Lord and his cause, on direct command of the Lord, one-tenth of our interests annually as a tithe? Are we a consistent people with respect to the tithe?

Tithing is a just and equitable means of distribution of the financial responsibilities of the members of the Church, to poor and rich alike. In any organization instituted for the mutual benefit of its

members, each member is expected to do his full share in maintaining the organization and assisting in its accomplishments. If he does not faithfully meet his obligations in that organization, he is justly regarded as not being a good member. We would not like to be regarded as being any thing other than a good member of the Church.

#### OUR INDEBTEDNESS TO GOD

There are many good reasons why members of the Church should pay their tithing, but all reasons that may be assigned do not have the same appeal to all members; however, the fact that God the Eternal Father, to whom we are indebted for all things, and on whom we depend for all things we hope to receive in this life and in the life to come, has asked it of us, and even commanded it of us, should have a strong appeal to all members.

If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments. (D. & C. 42:29.)

He that receiveth my law and doeth it, the same is my disciple; and he that saith he receiveth it, and doeth it not, the same is not my disciple, and shall be cast out from among you. (D. & C. 41:5.)

And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them. (Abraham 3:24-25.)

But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned. (D. & C. 58:29.)

... be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. (D. & C. 6:37.)

Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and needy, he shall, with the wicked lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment. (D. & C. 104: 18.)

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF CHURCH

The Church is accomplishing wonders today with the tithes and offerings of its members. A more wonderful work could be accomplished, and the poor of the Church be better cared for, if the members were all to pay an honest tithe, hence our appeal at this time.

Religionists of other denominations are taking cognizance of the way the law of the tithe is being observed in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its beneficial effects to both the Church and the members who observe to keep the law.

*The Deseret News*, reporting the proceedings of the annual Baptist state convention, September 23, 1915, said:

A feature of today was an address by the Rev. Dr. L. S. Bowerman, pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church of this city, on "Tithing, the Minimum Basis of Giving." He strongly advocated the ten percent tithing system, as it obtains in the Mormon Church, remarking, incidentally, "We ought to be as fully religious as the Mormons."

"Since the days of Abraham, a thousand years before Moses was born," said Dr. Bowerman, "the tithing system was inaugurated, and so took the precedence of the Mosaic Law." The speaker traced the history of the tithing system through the Old Testament and showed its endorsement in the New Testament, closing his address by showing the promises of God to the individual and the nation who paid tithing to his service, and for his cause, that they should prosper in the land, not only in the goods of this world, but as recipients of spiritual blessings. Dr. Bowerman's address was very well received and was considered one of the most scholarly addresses of the convention.

While the Methodist Church has not adopted the tithing system to raise funds for its support, the plan was sanctioned at the national convention of Methodists in Indianapolis, according to the Rev. A. M. Fisher of Pasadena, California. Mr. Fisher said that this system was right and successful inasmuch as the Church now employing it is in most satisfactory financial circumstances. It was, he states, the most representative gathering ever held in the interest of the Methodist Church.

Mormonism is having a reforming influence upon the religions of the world. The law of tithing is as old, as just, and as true, as any other law of the gospel.

#### OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSINGS

The nature of the covenant entered into in the waters of baptism is that we will keep all the commandments of God, one of which is tithing.

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated. (D. & C. 130:20-21.)

If tithing may be regarded as a temporal law, then the observance of the law of tithing should bring temporal blessings. We have promise of such blessings made to ancient Israel.

For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heavens, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (Malachi 3:6-10.)

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (Acts 10:34-35.)

The promises of the Lord made to ancient Israel will apply alike to all nations and people who will obey his laws and commandments.

### A WORTHY CAUSE

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is destined to bless and reform the whole world. It is intended eventually to correct all the great evils of society, and lift mankind to a higher plane of living physically, morally, and spiritually. It is a worthy cause in which to be engaged, and for which to spend our talents, our time, and our means. It is the greatest reform movement of the age. It is bound to succeed, for it is founded upon true and correct principles, revealed anew from heaven.

Those who give aid to its establishment, its growth, and its accomplishment, will surely share in the honor and glory of such a noble cause.

We are all candidates for the blessings of eternal life and exaltation in the kingdom of God. The direct line to that goal is through the observance of the law of tithing and making every sacrifice the gospel entails upon us. May God help us to this end, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet."

### ELDER THORPE B. ISAACSON

#### *Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

My brothers and sisters, I can assure you that standing before you makes one very humble. This is a beautiful Sabbath morning, even though the weather is a little stormy outside. It would be impossible for me, I am sure, to say anything that would be worth while unless the Lord will bless me.

I happen to have a son who belongs to one of those four thousand missionaries who are in the mission field. I received a telephone call from New Brunswick yesterday where he is laboring, and he said: "Dad, I just wanted to say hello to you. I know it's general conference in Salt Lake this week, and I know you're worried. I can assure you that I am praying for you."

I will appreciate it if I can have an interest in your faith and prayers, also.

### "TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU"

May I refer to Matthew 11:29-30?

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.  
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

We will have rest unto our souls to the degree that we can serve