

*One Hundred Twentieth*  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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With Report of Discourses



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The Brigham Young University Choir and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

### PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

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

The following is a quotation from the Pearl of Great Price, the word of the Lord to his servant Moses, the Prophet:

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. (Moses 1:39.)

#### MAN'S SALVATION

Hence we have the gospel and the Church of the Master as enjoyed by the Latter-day Saints of today, for it is through these sources that he purposes the accomplishment of all his designs pertaining to man's salvation.

There are therefore tremendous responsibilities resting upon his Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, pertaining to the salvation of the children of men; one of the greatest of which is to preach this gospel of the kingdom in all the world as a witness unto all nations before the end shall come.

And what is the Church doing about it? It is keeping about five thousand missionaries in the mission fields and stake missions of the Church, with several hundred in excess of that number at the present time in the nations of the earth and on the islands of the seas, where an intensive work of proselyting is being carried on and a wonderful work of conversion is being accomplished. There is also a condition at home, in the stakes of Zion, which calls for able missionaries who are zealous for the cause of the Master, and for the welfare and salvation of their fellow men.

#### ADULT MEMBERS OF AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

According to the latest statistics compiled in the office of the Presiding Bishopric, there are 53,392 male members of the Church over twenty-one years of age who hold some office in the Aaronic Priesthood who have not received the Melchizedek Priesthood. These are designated as adult members of the Aaronic Priesthood. There are 17,643 male members of the Church over twenty-one years of age who hold no priesthood at all. Taking these two groups together, we have 71,035 male members over twenty-one years of age who do not hold the Melchizedek Priesthood; a sufficient number to fill this Tabernacle to seating capacity seven times over, estimating the seating capacity at ten thousand.

These figures are appalling, and they represent only those living in the organized stakes of the Church. The missions have their quota also.

Worthy boys of the Church at twelve years of age are sup-

posed to receive the office of a deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood; at fifteen years the office of teacher; at seventeen years, the office of priest, and at nineteen years the office of elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood.

#### IMPORTANCE OF PRIESTHOOD

Statistics show that there are in the Church 3,648 male members between the ages of twelve and twenty-one years who hold no office in the priesthood.

One may ask, how important is it that male members of the Church should receive the priesthood; and how serious for them not to do so? The Lord answers this question on this wise:

And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood. (D. & C. 84:42.)

As Latter-day Saints, the goal of our existence and purpose in life is to obtain an exaltation in the kingdom and presence of the Father and the Son; and a man may not attain to that glory without receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood. This being true, the importance of receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood by the men of the Church is as important as is salvation itself.

The holy endowments administered in the temples of the Lord are to prepare men and women to enter into the celestial kingdom and presence of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. But to receive these endowments a man must first receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. Marriage for time and eternity as ordained of God is necessary for man's salvation.

. . . neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. (I Cor. 11:11.)

#### ETERNAL MARRIAGE

But a man must receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and endowments before he can go to the temple and be married for time and eternity—hence, the importance of receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Of the 71,035 men of the Church over twenty-one years of age who have not received the Melchizedek Priesthood, a large percentage of them, no doubt, are married and rearing families. Not having received the Melchizedek Priesthood, we know that their marriages are not for eternity as ordained of God, and that their children are not being born under the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. Men of the Church who have been married for time only are in danger of losing their wives and their children if they do not take the necessary steps to receive the priesthood and sealing ordinances ". . . my Spirit [the Spirit of God] will not always strive with man. . . ." (Ether 2:15). Neither will the patience of a good woman. For example, a man and woman came to the temple recommended for marriage, and with them were two

children born to the woman by a former husband. The mother desired the children to be sealed to her and to the man to whom she was about to be sealed. But how about the father of those children and his rights in the matter?

#### RULES IN TEMPLE WORK

There is a rule (rule 30) governing in temple work which says:

Children should not be sealed to other than their own parents, except for important reasons, and then only by special authorization of the temple president.

Hence, the appeal to the temple president: The rights of the father in this case must receive consideration. The father being dead, the mother was the only witness available. Her story was as follows:

The father and mother before marriage were members of the Church, and when contemplating marriage, she desired to go to the temple for marriage, but he had not been living his religion so as to be counted worthy of a recommend for that purpose. She decided to marry him by the civil law with the understanding, and his promise, that he would make himself worthy, and they would later go to the temple and be sealed. He failed to keep his promise. Several years after these children were born, he was taken ill and finally passed away. She said she nursed him through a long spell of sickness before his death and felt that she had done her full duty by him as his wife, but she did not want to be sealed to him for eternity, and she wanted her children to be sealed to her and the man of her choice.

The temple rules (rule 36) provide that where a man and woman are married by the civil law and have children and are afterward separated, so that the children cannot be sealed to both parents, if one has been altogether worthy and the other unworthy, the children may be sealed to the worthy parent and his or her sealed companion.

Under this rule, permission was given for the children to be sealed to the mother and the man to whom she is sealed; thus the father, through his unworthiness and neglect, has lost his wife and his children. This is but one case in a class which is far too numerous.

#### LOSS THROUGH NEGLECT

There is another class of members who, without the element of unworthiness, but by pure neglect, may lose their wives and children. A Latter-day Saint girl and boy contemplating marriage decided that they would marry outside of the temple and later go to the temple for sealing. Time went by until they had three children, and the husband became ill and died. Sometime later a Latter-day Saint man came along, courted and married the young widow, with the understanding that they would go to the temple

later, and he would act as proxy in having her and her children sealed to her dead husband. This contemplated work was delayed until she had three children by her second husband, who now thinks that he has as much right to her for eternity as has her dead husband. The woman desires to know to which husband she and her six children should be sealed. She was told that she would have to decide to which husband she would be sealed, and that to him and her all the six children are to be sealed. She is likely to take the living husband, in which event the first husband loses his wife and his children, through his own neglect. This represents another class of cases, and they, with slight variations, are numerous in the Church: evidences of the folly of neglect of religious opportunities.

#### LOSS THROUGH UNWORTHINESS

Another unfortunate class consists of those who have been married for time and eternity, and later the husband becomes lukewarm, inactive, and unworthy, resulting in a very unhappy marriage. The husband dies; the wife obtains a cancellation of their sealing; she later marries a man for time and eternity; the first husband has lost his wife, and possibly his children, through his unworthiness.

For the benefit of these men, their wives, and their children, no stone should be left unturned in an effort to improve these conditions. For the Lord's sake and that of his Church, also, we should try to love these people into activity and service. He needs them in the leadership and organizations of the Church, in quorums, wards, stakes, and missions. They owe it to the Lord that they put themselves in a position and condition to be used in his service.

#### MISSIONARY WORK

Individual missionary work on the part of active members conforms to the Lord's way with indifferent Church members and with non-members alike. In the Doctrine and Covenants we have the word of the Lord as follows:

Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads. (D. & C. 88:81-82.)

From this revelation, I understand that the Lord expects every person who has received the gospel to be a missionary for him throughout his life—not necessarily to go abroad by special call only, but to seek opportunity to preach the gospel to his non-member neighbors as well. We should not be afraid to offer to our neighbor or to any person who is desirous of obtaining salvation, that which, if accepted, and its precepts followed, will be to them as valuable as it is to us, which is of more value than anything else in life or than life itself.

That there are living among us many people who need what we have to offer—the gospel message—there can be no question from the fact that they are being converted in great numbers within the stakes and wards of the Church. The souls of these inactive members and nonmembers among us are as precious as the souls of people in foreign countries and in the islands of the seas where our missionaries are laboring. In conclusion let me read a few lines of poetry.

How sweet 'twill be at evening,  
 If you and I can say  
 Good Master, we've been seeking  
 The lambs that went astray—  
 Heartsore and faint from hunger  
 We heard them making moan,  
 And lo! We've come at nightfall  
 Bringing them safely home.

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

### ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I hope, my brethren and sisters, the words of testimony that I shall bear to you today may be prompted by the Spirit of our Heavenly Father, that I may carry on in the same fine spirit that has characterized the things that have been said already.

#### CONVERSIONS TO THE GOSPEL

I am extremely happy today in the fact that I am here; that I am, with you, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; that with you I have a testimony as to the truth of the gospel and the authenticity of the priesthood which we bear.

It is almost a hundred years since a missionary in New England found my mother's father and baptized him into the Church. He became one of the Apostles of the Church and was sent to open the missions of the Church in the Scandinavian lands.

Yesterday Dr. [John A.] Widtsoe told me that it is quite likely that nearly half of the people who are in the Church today can trace their ancestry to Scandinavia. About the same time a missionary in New Jersey found my father and brought him into the Church, my father eventually to become a counselor to President Grant. When I think of the weight of the responsibility I have in representing them, it is almost more than I can carry.

#### MISSIONARY BODY

I stand before you this morning representing the seventies of the Church, the great missionary body especially set apart for that purpose. It is our problem to see that the work initiated by