

were not intended to be good; but it often happened because those laws were not properly administered, or because the administration of the law was entrusted to those who were not just in their hearts.

These were circumstances that they could not control. They were creatures subject to these conditions, and must yield obedience to them. They must honor this law of God and also the law of men, and seek to be good citizens. It was the right of every individual within the sound of his voice, and throughout the world, to exercise his or her own judgment as to what was good and what was evil; and so long as every man or woman did, according to the light which he or she possessed, that which was right and avoided that which was wrong, they might continue to plead with God that the errors and evils and wrongs which existed amongst us might cease and righteousness reign in their stead. It was the duty of every one to pray to God that justice might be administered and truth upheld and sustained in the midst of the children of men every where.

As Latter-day Saints they believed in the Son of God, for they were Christians in every sense of the word. In believing this they did not alone depend upon that which was written in the Bible; they had not to depend entirely upon their faith in this matter. It was true they read the Bible, that they read the testimony of the ancient Apostles in the New Testament; they read the record of the Nephites on this continent, and they believed their testimony. But over and above that, greater than all this, they had in their hearts the inspiration of Almighty God, the revelations of God to man, teaching us that these things are true and that God lived, that Jesus is His Son, that He died for the world, that his blood cleanses us from all sin, through our obedience to the principles of the Gospel, and through our fidelity to the principles of righteousness in our lives. That was why it was impossible for a man who had once received the testimony of Jesus Christ to forsake God and join the various "isms" which existed in the world today. They might depart from this Gospel, from religion, from Christ, from the knowledge of God, from the faith of the Gospel of the Son of God, but they became infidels. This had been proven, and was known to be the fact. How careful then, they ought to be who had the privilege of knowing the truth for themselves.

After enlarging upon the subject of faith in God, the speaker went on to say that during his exile he enjoyed perfect liberty; because the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the Gospel of liberty, and whoever received it was free indeed, though he be in chains, in bondage or in prison. It made no difference as to that. He was free because God had made him so, and there was no freedom greater than this. Those of their brethren who had been in prison for conscience sake were free men, even though restricted of their liberty for the time. Why was he free? Because he owed no man, so far as he knew; because he did not entertain malice in his heart toward any man. He was no man's debtor to his knowledge, and, ac-

cording to the best of his ability he never wronged or injured anyone. If he had, let that man come and show him wherein he had wronged him, and, God being his helper, he would make it right to the last farthing. He had endeavored to live within the pale of the kingdom of God—the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that would make all men free, inasmuch as they would receive the truth.

His brethren and sisters would excuse him if he displayed a little fervor and enthusiasm—they might call it fanaticism if they pleased. What did he care. So that he was satisfied and knew that God had spoken to him, that he had received the truth, it made no difference. And if they had received the truth, could they be less fervent than he? No. Yet with all his thankfulness, with all his fervency, faith and confidence in the work in which they were engaged, he was not as earnest, devout, and thankful as he should be. There was still room to grow, to improve and enlarge his usefulness from day to day and from hour to hour, and he intended to try and improve upon each opportunity.

They must be subject to the powers that be, subject to the authorities of the Priesthood and of the Church; subject to their counsels of righteousness, subject to their directions in righteousness. They would only counsel them in that which was good in the sight of God. It was not an exhibition of freedom or manhood for men to disobey the words of God and the righteous counsels of His chosen servants. A man was a coward indeed who would do so. There was no cowardice in a man obeying at all times righteous counsel when it came from the Presidency of the Church, from the Apostles, from their Presidents of Stakes, from their Bishops, and Teachers, and from those who were authorized to teach, instruct, and counsel the people of God. It was manly, it was noble, it was independence of spirit for a man to hearken to such counsel and to be obedient to such men. It was brave; for the world was against the people of God. The world looked upon the Latter-day Saints with scorn and contempt, and thought they were deceived. But they were not. The finger of scorn was sometimes pointed at them because they said they were not ashamed to listen to the counsels of those good men who led and instructed them. But the people had proved them; they knew their principles, how they had guided the Saints in the past, they knew their integrity, their honor, their worth, their fortitude; and could therefore well afford to be guided by them in all things and be united with them. It was manly and Godlike to do so; not to do it was cowardly.

Would any man dare to tell him he was a coward when he listened to good counsel, no matter from whom it came? It took courage to do as they had done; and that was why the Latter-day Saints were independent men. They were chosen and uplifted of God because they dared to obey the truth, to acknowledge in the presence of the whole world that Jesus was the Christ and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the living God. They dared and proposed to continue to do this to the

end of their time, knowing that it was right, and did not intend to shrink from that duty, God helping them.

In conclusion the speaker exhorted the Saints to be faithful, humble, and diligent in the performance of all their duties, never wavering nor faltering in the least, but remaining steadfast in the principles of the Gospel. Then God would bless and prosper them and their children after them, from generation to generation.

#### President George A. Cannon

said he had listened, as no doubt all present had, with exceeding great pleasure to the testimony borne by President Joseph F. Smith. He felt that this was a time when they, as a people, could rejoice and be thankful unto God. This Conference would be a memorable one; for when they thought of the many changes that had occurred there was great reason for thanksgiving and giving praise to their Father in Heaven for His kindness and mercy unto them. He was satisfied that no power but that of God could have wrought the changes they had witnessed or delivered them as they had been delivered. Hence it seemed to him that this general Conference was a fitting occasion on which to join with all their hearts in thanking God, as a people, for that which He had done for them; and they might rest assured that He would yet continue to fulfil the many promises given unto His chosen ones.

It was a glorious thought that in the midst of affliction, sorrow, and trial that they had a Friend so powerful as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whom they served. It would be a dreary prospect before them, indeed, if it were not for the consolation that God had given them upon this point. God had called them to endure trials and to pass through tribulation. The hearts of His people had been wrung in anguish; their faith had been tested to the fullest extent; and had it not been for the promises of God and the faith given unto them they would have fainted by the wayside. But in the midst of their peculiar circumstances He had been near unto them; He had comforted their hearts, He had whispered peace, He had been on their right hand and on their left, and they had proved Him to be the God whom they declared Him to be; and those who were faithful would yet see the outpouring of His power, a bestowal of heavenly gifts, and an increase of heavenly manifestations such as they had never before witnessed.

He knew and could bear testimony that God was pleased with the Latter-day Saints and had accepted of their offerings; He had recognized their fidelity to His cause, their determination to do that which was required of them. There were many things yet to be accomplished and they would be done in the good time of the Lord. Brother Joseph F. Smith had told them that morning that he thanked God for the testimony he had received. It was something they should all be thankful for—that their great Creator, in the midst of the darkness, gloom and uncertainty which prevailed over the earth had condescended to reveal Himself to a few humble individuals who had sought to do His will; for though the