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## FAITH BRINGS BLESSINGS.

*Discourse delivered at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Friday, April 6, 1894, by*

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I sincerely trust that the wish expressed by President Woodruff concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon those who speak to the people may be fully realized throughout this entire Conference. In standing before you I desire to receive and impart such instruction as the Lord may desire to make me the instrument of bringing forth. I rejoice in the testimony of the Gospel which the Lord has given me; and though I feel my own imperfections and weaknesses every day that I live, yet I hope, through the faith and the power which God shall give me, to bring myself in time under complete subjection to the mind and will of God.

I am greatly pleased in traveling among the people to find how richly God is blessing them, especially in spiritual matters. The remark is sometimes made that there is less faith among the people than formerly, that we see fewer manifestations of the power of God, and that the saints are drifting gradually away from the old love which inspired their hearts and brought them into such close communion with the Lord our God. There are doubtless many cases of this kind—too many, considering the day in which we live and the momentous events which lie before the people; but I am pleased to note and to bear my testimony this day that the vast majority of the Latter-day Saints are striving to live their religion, and that they are in possession of the Holy Spirit of God; that they enjoy also the gifts of the Gospel. These gifts do not always come into such prominence as was the case in the early days of the Church, when almost every instance of the manifestation of the power of God was recorded; but I believe they are none the less numerous. I believe that the sick are healed by the power of God. I believe and know that the dead have been raised to life. I know that the gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues are experienced by the people. I know that the gift of prophecy is heard frequently among the people, and sometimes from those from whose mouths prophecy is least expected. I know that in the conferences of the people there is the power of God manifested to a remarkable degree. The reason that

some fail to experience the power which God has poured out upon the people is because they prefer to look upon the dark side of the picture, and do not see the glorious Gospel which God has bestowed upon us, His children. But while I testify to these things being in existence among the people, I realize that there is still much room for improvement. I realize that never before has there been so great an effort made by the adversary of our souls to lead away the Church of God, to deceive the people, and to lead them into darkness, as in the present day. On almost every hand, we hear, "Lo! here is Christ;" and even among the Latter-day Saints there have men arisen who testify that Christ has come, that He is living among the people, and they point out some personage whom they profess to recognize as the Savior of the world again come to visit the earth. These, my brethren and sisters, are the deceptions of Satan; and if you will live near unto the Lord, you may instantly discern the evil spirits which are abroad among the children of men; you may detect them when they come to you with their false doctrines and lying statements. If you live faithful unto the covenants which you have made, you will know by the testimony of the Spirit within you that when Christ comes you will know Him. There will be no need for any man to say to you that Christ has come again to earth; but by the knowledge which God shall impart unto you, by the sight of your own eyes and the hearing of your own ears, you shall be able to testify that the Savior has again come to earth, clothed with power and immortality, and bringing with Him the holy men and angels who exist with Him in the eternal worlds; and if you are faithful, you shall be caught up to receive from Him the blessings which your acts upon earth have merited.

I realize that there is indifference to some extent among the Latter-day Saints. I have thought sometimes that they have felt it was not necessary for them to seek an individual testimony of the truth of this work. They have satisfied themselves with the knowledge which their parents possessed of the divinity of the Gospel and the prophetic power which God conferred upon Joseph Smith. They are willing to listen to the counsels of the authorities of the Church and accept the theories which are advanced concerning our religion; but they do not seem disposed, for some reason, to seek for a practical and an undying testimony of the truth of this Gospel, without which no man or woman is sure of eternal life. They doubtless attend meetings because in this day it is fashionable to attend church; it is fashionable to study theology and to read the scrip-

tures; not seeking therein the inspiration which the scriptures contain, but reading them because it is considered an excellent literary work. In this spirit many of the young people read it. They read the works of the Church because of the historical information therein to be obtained. But they do not dig down to the root of things, to gain for themselves a testimony of the truth. The result is, we find a great many young men who go forth to the nations of the earth as missionaries without the testimony of the Gospel in their hearts. Time and time again have young men told me, when they have been set apart for their missionary labors, that they firmly believed that this was the work of God, and they could go forth to the people telling them of what they believed, but as for the knowledge of which they have heard their seniors testify, this had not come to them. They have acknowledged their neglect in not seeking it as earnestly as they should. They have gone on missions, and these same young men, I believe, without a single exception, laboring with earnestness and zeal in the fields to which they have been appointed, have not been left long without the testimony of the truth; and when they have returned there is not one of them whose words I have listened to but has testified that he knew for himself that the Gospel was true, that God had spoken from the heavens, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. It is well that they receive it even under these circumstances; but better far would it be if they could receive the testimony of the truth in their childhood, that it might grow with their stature and increase with their intelligence that it might become within them a living fire, which no amount of opposition or sophistry could quench. And this testimony is within the reach of every one. God has said that none who seek Him shall be turned away unsatisfied. Sometimes the testimony does not come in the way that we have desired. We do not receive the outward manifestations which we have been led to expect. But it is not the outward appearances; it is not the healing of the sick, nor the hearing of tongues, that gives a man or a woman the greatest strength in the work of God; for those who have never seen angels, whose eyes have not been closed to the glories of eternity, and to whom it has seemed impossible for God to forbid even anything which they asked—they have turned away from the truth, lost the testimony of the Spirit, and again gone into darkness. Better by far for us to possess the still small voice of the Spirit—the inward feeling which is experienced in every fibre of our organization, which tingles in our