

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, September 20th, 1891, commencing at 2 p. m., Counselor Charles W. Penrose presiding.

The choir sang the hymn commencing:

Earth, with her ten thousand flowers,
Air, with all its beams and showers.

Prayer was offered by Elder James P. Freeze.

The choir sang:

Jesus, once of humble birth,
Now in glory comes to earth.

The Priesthood of the Twenty-first Ward officiated in the administration of the Sacrament.

COUNSELOR CHARLES W. PENROSE

was called upon to address the congregation. He was glad to appear once more in the congregation of the Saints to worship God and to contemplate the things which are for our eternal benefit. He earnestly desired to have the faith as well as the attention of the assembly, that he might be inspired to touch upon subjects by which all might be edified and instructed. It is in vain to attempt preaching to the Latter-day Saints unless both speaker and hearers are inspired by the same Spirit. We have gathered not to hear a prepared lecture, but to be spiritually edified, and this can be accomplished only through the divine Spirit, that enlightens us in spiritual things.

This is in accordance with the teachings of the ancient apostles. For Paul says (1 Cor. II: 14): "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." We need this Spirit at all times, both when we gather together to worship God and in our daily life, that we may be able to overcome every difficulty and be in harmony with our heavenly Father.

The speaker read the following from the New Testament:

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James v, 13-15.)

The Apostle James was an authorized servant of the Lord. He had been sent to minister in the name of Jesus Christ. And we know that Christ, before sending His apostles out to preach to the world, told them that He sent them as the Father had sent Him. He gave them the keys of the kingdom. What they bound on earth should be bound in heaven and what they loosed on earth was to be loosed in heaven. After the resurrection Jesus called the Eleven together and said:

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow

them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark xvi, 15-18).

According to Matthew, Christ said in addition to this, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii, 20.) They were to go into all the world and teach all that Christ had commanded. The apostles did so, and God "confirmed the word with signs following."

Now James was one of these authorized and ordained servants of the Lord. For the Lord ordained them, and they went out, not in their own strength or in their own wisdom, but they preached what He had taught them, as Jesus preached what His Father taught Him. He did not proclaim His own views or opinions, but only that which God had given to Him. He said, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me."

What James here says is, consequently, something he was authorized to teach. It is the word of Christ and of God, the Eternal Father. It was inspired by the same Spirit that influenced the ancient servants of God, for the apostles have left on record that they were moved upon in a similar manner.

"For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter I, 21.)

The instructions of James is not followed by Christians in later times. It was customary in the primitive churches, if any was afflicted to pray; if he was merry to sing psalms, if he was sick to be anointed by the Elders in the name of the Lord, and God raised him up. Many besides the apostles had the gift of healing through faith. This custom of the early churches obtained a long time, in fact, as long as the Gospel was preached in its fullness and purity. But when ministers commenced to teach for doctrines the commandments of men instead of that which was authorized from on high, they departed from the simplicity of the Gospel and introduced many things, not of God but of man, some of which might be good while others were altogether erroneous. People disregarded the teachings of the Lord concerning the anointing of the sick, and instead, doctors multiplied and drugs were manufactured in great variety and abundance.

Among ourselves, in these valleys, it was customary in early times to call the Elders when anybody was sick, and they anointed him and prayed over him and the Lord raised him up. The missionaries who went out to the world preached the same doctrine and when they laid their hands on the sick, through faith the sick were healed. And it is a fact that healings occurred not only in common cases of sickness, but the blind were made to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk, and, in some instances, those pronounced dead were raised up to life. I testify that the same power that was manifested anciently has been manifested in our own day, and this testimony can be corroborated by thousands of people in these valleys.

In this, however, we do not claim any power or glory of ourselves. But we testify that God is the same today as He was formerly, and that He is willing to bestow the same gifts and blessings as in any other age of the world. They are essential to the Gospel and where it is preached in purity, they will follow as blessings to the faithful.

It should be observed that the promises connected with the instruction of James are predicated on the condition of faith. It is through faith that the sick are to be healed. We hear miracles ridiculed in this age of science. They are pronounced to be impossible, although nothing is impossible with God, except what is inconceivable. God can do whatever can be done. A miracle is, as some define it, a violation of the laws of nature. But this definition is not correct. There are many things in nature which are not understood—many natural and spiritual laws which are not explained. They will all be brought to light in the great dispensation of the fullness of times, for the edification and comfort and instruction of the children of God. But as yet, there are many things in the universe, the laws of which man has not discovered. The way in which many things are brought about is not understood, although the facts remain. Should I relate to you what I have witnessed in this Church through the laying on of hands by the servants of God, many of you would probably meet it with a smile of incredulity.

When Jesus was upon the earth, many wonderful things were performed, not in order to produce faith, but as the effects of it. Miracles are not given to produce belief, for they are performed by the power of that faith which already exists. When our Lord healed the sick, He usually said: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." He said also: "All things are possible to them that believe." When He went among His own people in His native place, He performed no mighty works on account of their unbelief, and He marvelled because of that unbelief. If miracles were for the purpose of producing faith, that would have been the very place in which to perform them. But the Savior could not do so because of the prevailing unbelief. Faith is necessary in him who administers as well as those who are to receive the benefits. The gifts of the Spirit are enumerated by Paul:

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another working of miracles. (1 Cor. xiv, 8-10.)

These different gifts are given to different individuals, and faith is one of these gifts. By it man can lay hold of divine things and have communion with God. Miraculous signs are wrought as the effects of a spiritual force which we may not comprehend, but there are many natural forces we do not fully understand. There is, for instance, the law of gravitation. Who understands it? What is weight? It is easy to say that certain phenomena are the result of gravitation, but that does not explain it. What is the force by which the earth and other planets revolve on their own axes and