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## INDIVIDUAL SALVATION.

*Discourse delivered in the Tabernacle,  
Salt Lake City, Sunday afternoon,  
October 14th, 1894, by*

**PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON**

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

When we assemble together as we have done this afternoon, it is our privilege, if we will exercise faith before the Lord, to receive instruction and counsel adapted to our circumstances. I have never felt satisfied in attending meetings in this Church unless I have been profited by that which I have heard, or, if it were my lot to speak, by that which I spoke; because I believe that when a man speaks by the Spirit of God, he not only edifies and comforts those who hear, but he himself is probably more benefited than any of his hearers. The people who assemble should so exercise faith in their prayers to the Lord that the meeting will be profitable, and that they will feel refreshed and strengthened. Our circumstances are such in this life that we need to be strengthened and comforted. Especially is this the case with the Latter-day Saints, because they have many things to contend with. A true Latter-day Saint depends upon the Spirit of God for strength and comfort, for peace and light. There are many in the world who depend for comfort and enjoyment upon stimulants of various kinds and upon social pleasures. All kinds of amusements are put within the reach of the people and a great many go through the world depending upon these external things for their enjoyment and happiness. But a man, according to our religion, who depends upon such things as those, never can be a truly happy man. Therefore, entertaining the views that we do of life, and of the character of life that we should lead, we need the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon us. When we come to meeting we need to have our souls revived and strengthened so that when we go into the busy world we carry with us as a fountain within, bubbling up with pure happiness and joy, this Holy Spirit. I have always said, and I believe it is true, that there are no people upon the face of the earth who are so happy as the Latter-day Saints. And their happiness is not of an evanescent character; it is not that which comes from external surroundings; it is the happiness that is within, through the presence of the Spirit of God. A great many people, and I do not know but some of us are in that condition, seem to depend upon surrounding circumstances for happiness.

The true theory of life, as I understand it, is to have the fountain of happiness within ourselves, so that whether we are in the midst of poverty, or of adversity, or of affliction, we may have with us a constant source of enjoyment and pleasure, through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Reference has been made to the early days of our settlement in these valleys. It can truthfully be said that the Latter-day Saints were then a very happy people, although they scarcely had the barest necessities of life. So it has been in the midst of trying scenes and circumstances since that time, as well as before that time. This is due to the presence of the sustaining power and blessing of God. It is every person's duty in this Church, and it is the constant exhortation of the leaders of the people, to seek for and enjoy the presence of the Spirit of God, so that none will be wholly dependent upon another human being for enjoyment and happiness and for a knowledge of the truth, but that each may receive a testimony that this is the Church of God; that the priesthood has really come from Him; and that the men who exercise this priesthood are not pretenders, but are indeed that which they profess to be. This is the bounden duty of all the members of this Church, so that they may not be assailed by doubts, but that they will walk in the light. In this way a great people can be built up; for these are the elements of greatness. It seems to be one of the faults of human beings, however, to lean upon others, and to do that which others do, regardless of their own convictions, instead of developing their own qualities that God has endowed them with. How often you see men and women justify themselves for doing things because somebody else does them.

At our late conference very strong teachings were given respecting the observance of the Word of Wisdom. How many there are who, if they saw one of the Presidency or one of the Twelve drinking tea or coffee, or using any other articles which the Word of Wisdom counsels us not to use, would justify themselves in their indulgence because of this. Parents do certain things, and because the children see their parents do these things they do them. So it is throughout the world. But it should not be among us to the extent that it is. Each individual should seek to do that which he himself knows to be right, regardless of what others do. We should have clear convictions as to the truth, then carry out those convictions in the proper spirit. For God desires to make of us a people of this kind. He has promised the Latter-day Saints that they shall be rulers in

His kingdom. He has promised that we shall have thrones, crowns, principalities, powers and dominion. These are not idle promises. They have a meaning for every soul unto whom they are made. I know that if we will live for them, we shall have thrones, actual thrones; we shall wield sceptres, as far as sceptres are emblematical of power and authority; we shall have dominion and control if we live so as to develop the Godlike attributes that we have inherited from our Great Father. For there is not one soul here today that is not endowed with the attributes of Deity, undeveloped probably in many instances, but there. God's design in revealing the Gospel is to develop these attributes in His children, so that men may be made the companions of the Lord Jesus, co heirs with Him to all the glory and power that the Savior Himself enjoys and wields. Therefore, if we be men and women, it is our duty to do that which we ourselves know to be right. What matters it to me if man chooses to do a thing which is not right? Is it for me to do as he does? No. It is for me to conceive correctly that which is right, then carry it out in my life, and teach others to do the same. Until we do this we shall never attain unto that glory that He has promised, God has made great promises to us connected with the Celestial Kingdom. Some have imagined that as soon as they leave this state of existence they enter upon celestial glory, especially after they get their resurrected bodies. I do not believe that we will ever reach there unless we develop within us those qualities which will fit us for that exaltation. The promise is given to us, but we must live so as to realize it. No being can be exalted only by self development and self exertion. God will bestow His blessing, but we must be developed under His power and blessing upon us. It is a vain idea, taught in the false religions of the day, that all a man has to do is to believe and then his eternal happiness is insured. It is such doctrine as this that leads men who call themselves ministers of religion to stand upon the scaffold with the condemned murderer, and promise him that he will be ushered into the immediate presence of the Son of God because he professes to believe in Him. It is folly and wickedness to teach this. It belittles God and the Savior. We should not deceive ourselves with such an idea. If we are to associate with our Father in Heaven, and with the Savior, it must be because we become like them. If there is a quality which Jesus possesses, we must possess it. If there is faithfulness which He has exhibited, we must exhibit it. If there is obedience which He has manifested while in the