Part 2 DESERET EVENING NEWS. 9 to 16

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1893. SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Spiritual Gifts.

Discourse Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, November 26, 1893, by

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I will read a portion of the 12th chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians:

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you to be ignorant.

"Ye know that ye were Heathen, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

"And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord.

"And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

"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 the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

In standing up to address you this afternoon, I earnestly solicit an interest in your faith and prayers, that I may be led to say the very things that should be said for your edification. However unfitted I may be with public speaking, I never arise without feeling my insufficiency and my inability to instruct the people. I know that no man can do this properly without the aid of our Eternal Father through His Holy Spirit.

Since I came in here my mind has rested upon this 12th chapter of Corinthians and upon similar instructions in other books that we hold sacred. These were the instructions that Paul gave to the Corinthian Church in the day in which he lived concerning spiritual gifts, the writings are full of exhortations to the people where he was the instrument in the hands of God of bringing to the knowledge of the Gospel, concerning the importance of exercising faith in God in order to receive the blessings that were peculiar to those who obeyed the Gospel of Jesus. The Savior himself, as well as all His Apostles of whose labors we have an account, endeavored to impress the people with the importance of their relationship to the Almighty through their obedience to the Gospel of the Son of God. Miraculous powers were possessed, and gifts of the most precious character. These were to be enjoyed by those who heard in obedience to the requirements of the Gospel. The followers of the Lord were distinguished from the people with whom they labored by the possession of these powers. They were peculiarly blest; and while they did not work signs and perform miracles in order to convince people that they were the servants of God, yet they exercised these powers in many instances. They exhorted, as Paul does in that which I have read to you, those who became members of the Church of Christ to seek earnestly for these gifts, and they themselves were in the habit of doing so. Their ability was within the reach of every faithful man and woman who embraced the Gospel. The Savior promised His disciples that "these signs shall follow them that believe." He said that under the power given to His disciples, which it was extended to all who should believe, all who should expose the plan of salvation which He taught. Hence we find that wherever the Apostles labored they taught the people that these gifts and blessings and peculiar heavenly powers were to be obtained by them through the exercise of faith. The whole tenor of their writings was to this effect, not only in the Corinthians, but to all those who had exposed the Gospel under their teachings.

In our day, for nearly sixty-four years the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have testified that God has restored the everlasting Gospel to the earth; that with it He has restored the authority that had been taken from the earth, by means of which men can administer the ordinances of life and salvation; and that through this restoration, the gifts, the blessings, and the powers that had been bestowed upon believers in ancient days were again enjoyed by the children of men. The history of the teachings of the Elders of the Church has been to awaken manifold to these solemn and important truths and to cause in their hearts the old faith, that had died out from among men, causing these gifts and blessings to be sought for by the faithful in the days of old, to be sought for by the children of men, in this dispensation.

Besides ask these questions. But those who have faith in God understand that this is a state of probation; that we are not personally to have our faith tested and developed. By the exercise of faith, a knowledge of God will be obtained, as well as the blessings and gifts of God, so that man need not walk in darkness and in doubt. He can receive the evidences from the Lord, by the exercise of faith, that will convince him of the existence of his Father in heaven, and also of the willingness of his Father to bestow upon him the blessings and the powers which are addressed to His children. It is for the purpose that these gifts are bestowed that those who do obey the commandments of God shall be possessors of them, and that those who have not have, the bestowal of them is so ordained of God as to make a distinction between the people of God and those who are not His people. To give them this opportunity which the possession of these gifts bring, the revelations of these gifts bring.

We have been exhorted and encouraged many times, as I have said, to lead mankind to believe that these things are possible. But it has been an uphill business. There have been great obstacles in the way. Men have declared it impossible that God should bestow such powers upon His children. The generations that have preceded us have written down their thoughts, and they therefore come down to us as the inheritance of our fathers, and we have inherited from our fathers the idea that these things are not to be enjoyed. We have inherited the idea that God does not bestow such gifts and blessings upon His children, and that the Church of Christ does not, and therefore they were not to be looked for.

Now, I want to bear my testimony in the first place, that God is the same to us as He was to the people who lived in the days of the Apostles. I do not intend to enter into any argument upon this point. Suffice it to say that I know this, and I want every one who hears me to know that I know it. I want to bear my testimony to the world that God is the same to us as He was to the people who lived in the days of the Apostles. We who have read the Bible know that God is not a man, that He is not changeable, that He does not change His mind, that He does not change His purpose, that He does not change His plan of salvation, that He does not change His ordinances, that He does not change His gifts and blessings.

The Father in heaven delineated to us in our day the truth in the same way that He delineated it to the people who lived in the days of the Apostles. He has restored the Gospel. He has restored the authority of the priesthood. He has restored the ordinances of the Gospel, by means of which mankind can receive the ordinances and the blessings which always follow obedience to these ordinances.

The time was, for years and years and years, when it was a matter of doubt that these gifts would be enjoyed by any people. I will not bear a testimony that God has given to the Church, through the prophets, in the revelations which we have received, the promise that these gifts should be enjoyed in connection with those who have been baptized into the Church, and who have received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, if they would live for them. Many times we have testified to this, and we have sent our testimony abroad to the world. We have testified to our children, and we have testified to our friends, and we have testified to our neighbors, that these things belong to us as much as they belonged to the people who lived in the days of the Apostles. We have testified that we have seen them, that we have enjoyed them, that we have witnessed their operation among us, that we have seen the sick healed, that we have seen the blind receive their sight, that we have seen the lame walk, that we have seen the deaf hear, that we have seen the dumb speak, that we have seen the evil spirits cast out, that we have seen the dead raised, that we have seen all manner of miracles performed among us, that we have seen the sick administered to, and we have seen them recover in consequence of the administration of the Elders of Israel. We have seen the blind, we have seen the lame, we have seen the deaf, we have seen the dumb, we have seen evil spirits cast out, we have seen the sick administered to, and we have seen them recover in consequence of the administration of the Elders of Israel. We have seen the dead raised in consequence of the administration of the Elders of Israel. We have seen all manner of miracles performed among us, we have seen the sick administered to, and we have seen them recover in consequence of the administration of the Elders of Israel. We have seen the blind, we have seen the lame, we have seen the deaf, we have seen the dumb, we have seen evil spirits cast out, we have seen the dead raised, we