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# DISCOURSE

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Sunday, February 26th, 1899, by

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**A New Dispensation—True Charity—A Form of Godliness and the Power Thereof—The Latter-Day Kingdom—Religious Unity—The Second Advent—Restoration of the Priesthood—Perpetuity of the Last Dispensation.**

My brethren and sisters, I take pleasure in associating with you in a worshiping capacity. I have been pleased and edified in the testimonies and prayers of my brethren, and I wish them power as interest in your prayers which I shall occupy this responsible place. It could be very evident to all classes of people who are thoughtful, and who are honest in their motives, that the Latter-day Saints are a sincere people, and we cheerfully accord to all classes of religious people sincerity in their convictions of the truth. We do not come into the world with the purpose or intent of assailing the religious institutions of the world, nor of depreciating the honesty and purity of the votaries of the various religious societies and sects. We believe that there is a large percentage of them who are honest in their motives and in the observance of that which they conceive to be their duty to God and to mankind. We also cheerfully advance the principle that man's action should be as well as otherwise, should be accorded the utmost freedom, as long as that action does not infringe upon the rights of others; that if men are mistaken in their views, through depending upon the interpretations of others, or learning men of different creeds and through errors that may have come down through the ages because of a lack of direct communication with God, they are responsible to God and not to man.

We have been here a very solemn testimony that the Lord has instituted a new dispensation. And what we mean by that is the opening of the heavens, the giving again of direct communication between God and man; the establishment on the earth of the principles of the Gospel as Jesus taught them, organizing the Church with the same ecclesiastical form of government as He instituted in Palestine, and teaching the same faith, requiring the same results to follow the acceptance of that faith, and declaring the same kind of promises which comes to a people who shall walk in the ordinances of that faith, and also—but the shallow pretension that will satisfy any religious sentiment of mankind, but the turning away from the actual practice of iniquity in all its forms, with a determination to serve God and keep His commandments unto the end. We teach that baptism is an outward ordinance, which should be observed as a manifestation of faith in Jesus Christ, and that true repentance and baptism shall be obtained by a remission of sins. But inasmuch as the outward ordinance of baptism does not reach all people, and is not the birth of the soul, and in order that we may indeed be born of God, it is necessary to receive a birth of the Holy Spirit, by which we are placed in communion with God, and we are made heirs of salvation, and is attended with all the gifts of the Gospel, such as the gift of healing, the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy, the receiving of heavenly visions, and the manifestation of the power of God in various ways. Those in possession of these gifts is the result of being born of the water and of the Spirit—born of God.

In testifying that such a condition has been restored to the earth, and that we have received it, we claim that we have a spirit of charity and of love for the salvation of the children of men. We claim that we have been doing all we can to depreciate the true principles which they already have but rather a spirit of contention and desire to exalt themselves above the light. And while we believe there are fragments of truth in the various institutions of the earth, and also among the heathen, we believe and we testify that in the restoration of this Gospel the truth has been restored to the earth in its entirety—that is, that all the blessings and gifts which were enjoyed by the primitive Saints have been restored for the benefit and blessing of mankind in this age of the world.

I wish to ask you, my brethren and sisters and friends, if there is anything unreasonable in the thought that such a condition should be brought about in this age of the world? If it was necessary that men should enjoy the gifts of revelation in past times in order to their salvation and the salvation of the Church, it certainly is essential that we should enjoy the same spirit today. I wish to refer you to a few passages of scripture to show you that God never has dealt unreasonably or inconsistently. In the first place I call you to the fact—a fact which must be patent to every thoughtful person and woman who takes any interest whatever in the religion of Christianity—that notwithstanding the numerous attachments of man in the world, from the days of Jesus down to the present time, they have never been able to bring the people to a unity of the faith, and they have never become harmonious in the observance of the ordinances and ceremonies instituted by the Son of God Himself. These young men have spoken that which is true and bear testimony of the truth. For ten or fifteen years they have been traveling in the United States and the other in the Southern States, and when they have stood up to declare the truth of the have done it without precedent, with as to what they were about to say—not that they had a message full and empty. For it has been constantly rejected upon the Latter-day Saints that they should preach to the people the words of eternal life and that they should not be idle and that they should continue to seek for wisdom and the fear of books. You may read such instructions in the 5th and 6th sections of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants—a book which contains the revelations of God to the Prophet Joseph Smith for the guidance of His Church in this dispensation. These young men have been about to speak among strangers without purchase any high scholastic attainments, but they have received assistance of the truth, and they have stood up before the congregations of the people and explained the doctrines of Christ unto them as they understood them, and because of that they were moved upon by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says:

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." I Corinthians, 2: 11.

It was the Spirit of God that should know the things of God, and only as men possessed that Spirit could they comprehend the things of God. This perfectly harmonizes with the statement made by the Redeemer of mankind when He sent His disciples to declare the Gospel. He sent them, exactly under similar conditions and to follow the same rules in their instruction to the people as He has enjoined upon the Latter-day Saints in this glorious dispensation committed unto us.

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." Matthew, 10: 16-19.

This was the injunction of Jesus to those who were sent forth to preach as sent Him in the world, and I know of no authorized revelation justifying men in changing that plan of procedure in the Gospel. Let me read a little more from the statement of Paul to the Corinthians:

"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians, 2: 12-14.

Now I wish to assert in words of honesty and truth, that I believe that this truth enunciated by the Apostle Paul has been verified in all the history of the world, especially respecting the doctrines of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When Martin Luther, John Calvin and other reformers felt that it was their duty to stand up and declare their convictions against the superstitions of the Roman Church, they were ever able to say that God had revealed unto them how to organize a new Church and establish a new faith, some of them pretended to have received communication from God by the manifestation of a holy angel, some of them claimed to have been placed in the position of having obeyed the Gospel at the hands of some men having claim of authority from God. Consequently, notwithstanding they have so boasted of their knowledge of the truth, they do not harmonize on the doctrines of Christ. Take for instance, the subject of baptism as taught by them. There was a difference on this point between Luther and some other reformers, and between Zwingli and John Calvin, because of this difference, and the lack of revelation to enlighten them, a new sect arose, and then another, and this dividing and instituting new organizations has been the result. Some have also—but the shallow pretension that will satisfy any religious sentiment of mankind—but the turning away from the actual practice of iniquity in all its forms, with a determination to serve God and keep His commandments unto the end. We teach that baptism is an outward ordinance