

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, July 24th, 1892, commencing at 2 o'clock p.m., Elder H. P. Richards presiding.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn beginning:

Come, Come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear,
But with joy wend your way.

Prayer was offered by Elder Wm. B. Barton.

The choir sang the at them:

Let the mountains shout for joy,

The Sacrament was administered by the Priesthood of the Twenty-second ward.

ELDER GEORGE G. BYWATER

was called upon to address the congregation. He earnestly desired, he said, that the invocation already offered up for the blessings of God to rest upon us might be realized, for he knew that the things of God cannot be comprehended, except the Spirit of God makes them clear. This is according to Holy Scriptures. As a congregation of worshippers, our meeting is in vain unless aided by this divine Spirit. The speaker hoped, however, that the Saints would be blessed by the intelligence and truth that come from above, to increase their faith and establish them more fully in the revelations of God to man.

It is no longer questioned among intelligent people that we are independent creatures. Bible believers know that we are the creation of a Supreme Being. We have not made ourselves, but we are the outgrowth of infinite intelligence. All Christians admit this. It forms part of the faith and creed of the Christian world, notwithstanding the contradictions of those creeds in other respects. It is a fundamental doctrine. But to the Latter-day Saints as well as former-day Saints, there are principles connected with this creed, which it becomes their duty to understand. It is not sufficient to believe that there is a God, but it is necessary to seek to comprehend and accept all He has revealed to mankind.

The Christian world admit that He has never revealed anything in vain, and that all His commandments are essential to salvation, but they have interpreted the word of God variously and made it to agree with their own traditions. As Saints, we hold that it is necessary to accept every word spoken from above.

The principles of our faith have been so often explained, that but few do not have an idea of the claim of our Church. It is understood that we believe all that God has revealed through all inspired men in all dispensations, whether in the Old Testament or the New, or in the Book of Mormon, which we also hold to contain the word of God to the inhabitants of the earth.

The Lord has been pleased to open up a number of dispensations, during which men have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the designs of the Almighty, through the principles which He has taught them.

The first of these principles is faith in God as the supreme ruler of the universe and the Father of the human family in whose likeness we have been

created. Faith is the foundation of all, for without faith it is impossible to please God. Without faith we can not serve Him or honor His word to us. If we have faith in Him and His qualities of mercy, power, wisdom, etc., we are expected to rely upon His word with firm assurance. If we have the faith that inspired Moses, or Joshua, or Abraham, we have the faith that enables us to draw near unto Him and we will be able to gaze upon the matchless richness of eternity. Then we will also discover in the teachings of God, to what extent the whole human family has fallen from the lofty pinnacles of perfection in which man was once created. We will be enabled to discover our sins and transgressions. And if we discover that mankind has departed from rectitude and gone after their own idols, we will perceive the necessity of the second principle of the Gospel—repentance.

That mankind has departed from the ways of the Lord, there can be no doubt, for history proves it. In all ages of the world, when the Lord has been pleased to send a messenger to the world, the people to whom they were sent have always failed to recognize these ambassadors, and rejected them. How was it that the ante-diluvians rejected Noah, who preached to them for one hundred and twenty years? The messages of prophets and new revelations from God have never been popular when first introduced.

Popularity, majority and authority are ideas that are often associated together in the minds of men, but it is a great fallacy to suppose that the majorities are generally right. They were not in the days of Noah. New truths or, rather, older truths revealed again, have always at first been regarded as heresy and as such rejected by the majority. So it was during the establishment of Christianity. The doctrines of Jesus were not received by the majority. Christ and His apostles were looked upon as prophets and inspired men have always been regarded—as impostors, and their words were rejected as nought. The followers of Jesus were considered a sect, against whom everybody spoke evil. Their teachings were considered a dangerous innovation, something out of harmony with good government. Christ was thought to be a political conspirator, and accusations of that nature were frequently brought against Him no less than impeachments against His moral character.

Christianity was not at first accepted by the religious world or its various sects; it was vigorously opposed and its followers were cruelly persecuted by the legal authorities. The teachings of Jesus that provoked such malice, envy and hatred were certainly not the doctrines which were handed down from the fathers. The Jews claimed to be the custodians of the divine truth, having the right to give the only authoritative exegesis of the Scriptures. But Christ rebuked them for sanctioning the seeds of their fathers in persecuting and killing the prophets and He charged them with ignorance concerning the meaning of the Scriptures they claimed to believe in. Had they understood the principles written by the prophets, they

would have seen in Jesus the fulfillment of the predictions, many of which are remarkably clear. But they did not, but stumbled, because they had apostatized from God and become carnally minded, and consequently blind to all spiritual truths. Thus it happened that Christ came to His own, but His own did not recognize Him.

Christ taught all men that God is their Father and that He (Jesus) was the Savior, through which man should be restored again to the fullness of perfection that was once the condition of man. But His message was rejected by the great multitudes as was the message of Noah. For this reason the Jews were rejected and the message carried to the Gentiles. But even among these the majority did not receive it.

The speaker explained that faith and repentance are no new principles, but eternal as all truth, and essential to all dispensations. The same, he said, was true of baptism. Israel was baptized by Moses in the sea, and the cloud of glory, the power of the Holy Ghost, rested upon them after their baptism. Baptism was evidently a part of the old dispensation as it is of the new. The law of carnal commandments was taken away, when the Gospel was given, but faith, repentance and baptism remain. As another proof that baptism was known among the Jews, the speaker referred to the fact that the inhabitants of Judea went out to John to be baptized by him in Jordan, and it is clear that the rite was well known and acknowledged by the people, since no one ever questioned the validity of the ordinance, as a divine institution, although some wanted to know by what authority John the Baptist administered it.

Baptism is the immersion in water for the remission of sins, by one having authority to do so in the name of Jesus. It is to be wondered at, that Christians can not see that they have departed from the doctrines and ordinances of Christ in this matter. There are Christians today—honest no doubt, but like the Jews—denying that baptism is essential to the salvation of man. We find that Christ established this ordinance for the benefit of repentant believers who are willing to become disciples of the Great Master. Yet there are numerous ideas in the Christian world both as to the mode and proper subjects of baptism, and no one seems to comprehend what its real nature is. The Jews, as has been remarked, apostatized and rejected Christ and His apostles, making martyrs of His followers. A lady once said to Carlyle, "How cruel it was of those Jews to put Christ to death, a man who had done all to help and bless his fellow men; how different would His reception have been, had He come in our age." To this the great author answered, Yes, it would have been different, had He come with his pockets full of money and preached according to the creeds that are now accepted as orthodox. But if He should come again and lift His voice against the crimes of the age, the world would say, Away with Him to Newgate and hang Him. That would be about the only difference.

How sad to contemplate this, but it