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THE POWER OF FAITH.

Discourse Delivered at the Sixty-fourth Semi-Annual Conference, of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, October 8th, 1893, by

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I have never attended a conference since I have been a member of this Church—now nearly sixty years—at which I have refused, when called upon by the proper authority and the Spirit of God, to speak and to bear my testimony according to the light that I had in me, and I disliked to pass over this conference without saying something. I have been in poor condition for public speaking, having had a severe cold upon my lungs during the past week, which has prevented me from doing almost any kind of business.

I have been deeply interested in the testimonies of the servants of God who have addressed us during this conference. They have laid before us many great truths. My mind rests upon the subject of faith. Faith is the first principle of the Gospel. What is faith? Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, undertakes to explain it. He says that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and to prove this he goes on to tell what different men accomplished through faith. (See xi chap. of Hebrews.) I look upon faith as one of the most important principles that God ever revealed to man. Here we have four temples in these mountains, and hundreds of people are laboring in them. Who for? Both for the living and the dead. Why do they labor for the dead? Have they ever seen the resurrection of the dead? No, except by vision or revelation. But they have faith in it, and as an evidence of that faith they perform this work. They look forward to the resurrection and eternal judgment, to the celestial kingdom and the great blessings which God has revealed for the salvation and exaltation of the children of men. They do this by faith, and it is by this power that they have accomplished what they have during the last sixty years. By faith this tabernacle has been built, these temples have been reared, and these people have been gathered from the nations of the earth. Thousands of Elders have been called, not from colleges, but from the various occupations of life, and sent forth into the world to preach the Gospel without money and without price. Now for many years they have gone forth and preached this Gospel. Men have listened to them,

and some spirit or power has convinced them that the testimony which these Elders have borne was true. These humble men of God have gone forth and said: "The fullness of the everlasting Gospel has been revealed by the administration of angels; the Lord has raised up prophets and inspired men; He has organized the Church on the earth as it was in the days of Jesus Christ and the Apostles; we have brought you this Gospel; hearken to it, and we promise you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, if you will receive our testimony, repent of your sins, go down into the water and be baptized for the remission of your sins, you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, that shall bear record and witness unto you that what we say is true." What has been the result of this? Thousands have believed that testimony and proved that it was true. These Elders labored by faith; they traveled by faith; they worked by faith. It was faith that sustained them all the way through. They traveled without purse and scrip, and through their faith the God of heaven fed and clothed them, and opened the way before them. This has been the case now for sixty years. And many people believed the testimony of these simple men. They repented of their sins, were baptized for the remission of them, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; they received that Holy Ghost, and it bore testimony to them of the truths of the Gospel.

Brethren and sisters, it is by faith that you are here today, gathered from the nations of the earth. By that power you have been sustained, until you have accomplished these things that are now before you in your history. We ought to look at these things as they are. We ought to have faith, not only in what is past but in what is to come. It is by faith that we look forward to the resurrection of the dead. Our forefathers are in the spirit world. They died without the Gospel. They never saw the face of a prophet or an apostle. They laid down their bodies, and their spirits went into the spirit world. There they have listened to the Gospel of Christ. Jesus taught the Gospel in the spirit world while His body lay in the tomb. Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and those Elders of Israel who have been martyred and who have died for the word of God and testimony of Jesus have gone to preach this Gospel there. Spirits in prison have received their testimony. The prison doors have been opened. These spirits will come forth in the morning of the resurrection, and they will receive these blessings and glories, the same as if they had heard and received the Gospel in the flesh. And these Latter-day Saints have built these temples and gone to

work in them with just as much assurance of the truth of these things as though it had been sounded in their ears by the trump of the archangel of God. They have had this faith, and they will not be disappointed.

That is the condition the Latter-day Saints are in today. As to opposition, we may expect that, because the arch-enemy has labored against the work of God in all ages of the world. But we have reason to rejoice and to be thankful to our Heavenly Father that we are as well as we are today before Him. I want the Latter-day Saints to bear in mind that the ancient patriarchs and prophets spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the truth. The Lord has said just what He meant, and meant what He said. The word of the Lord will never fall unfulfilled. If you want to know what is coming to pass, read the revelations of God in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon and in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. The revelations of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith are glorious revelations. What the Lord promised in the commencement of this work has been fulfilled to the very letter up to the present. So it will continue. We should lay these things to heart.

There has been a good deal said with regard to our temporal affairs. That is all right. What the brethren have said concerning our temporal condition is of importance to us. I still am of the opinion that inasmuch as Zion is going to be built up on the earth, it is the mind and will of God that we should do something for ourselves. We ought to cultivate the earth. We ought not to wait for the world to come and plant and dig our potatoes, or plant and harvest our wheat, or to build railroads and carry them on. The Presidency of the Church have shouldered a very heavy load connected with this sugar factory. Why should we not make sugar? Utah sends a very great amount every year out of the Territory for sugar. This should not be. The soil is here and the talent is here to raise beets and to make sugar. Why should not the Latter-day Saints do this and keep their money at home? Is there any sin in this? Not at all; the more of these things we would do, the better, I think, the Lord would be pleased with us. I know there has been quite a feeling one way or another, because we have burdened ourselves with these labors. But it is our duty to try to get the Latter-day Saints to cultivate the earth and to produce what they eat and drink and what they wear. We have tried to do this. It is true, it cost a great deal to establish the sugar plant, and the Church had to shoulder a great measure of responsibility in connection with it,