

## DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER FRANCIS M. LYMAN.

*At the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,  
Utah, Sunday, December 18th, 1892.*

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I desire the assistance of the Holy Spirit and your faith and prayers in my behalf; for it is not possible for me to edify the people, or to speak to my own satisfaction, unless the Lord assists me, and I shall be pleased to say what I ought to say as the Lord will give me utterance.

I appreciate the fellowship of the Latter-day Saints and the privilege of meeting with the people on the Sabbath day, to worship the Lord, to partake of the sacrament, and to have my strength renewed, as I feel that I need it from week to week. I wonder sometimes why such a percentage of the Latter-day Saints can feel contented upon the Sabbath day to absent themselves from the house of worship, because the Lord requires us to keep the Sabbath day holy, to refrain from labor, from pleasure-seeking, from business transactions, and from secular pursuits, and to meet together to worship Him, to offer up our prayers of gratitude, to speak of His goodness, and to hear His word and will made known to us. I understand that these requirements are just as necessary to maintain a healthy condition in the spirit as it is for us to partake of food to maintain the health of the body; and I believe that all Latter-day Saints must feel a measure of condemnation when they neglect these requirements. I do not believe that it is possible for us to please the Lord and neglect any of our duties. There is no doubt that an amount of pleasure is enjoyed by the Lord when He notices the obedience of His children in some things; but His pleasure can hardly be complete unless His children are obedient in all things.

The Sabbath day has been provided for man as a day of rest and of worship; and the Latter-day Saints, of all people, acquainted as they are with the principles of the Gospel, and measureably appreciating them, should keep holy the Sabbath day. We have the plan of salvation complete and perfect, as introduced by the Father, and as revealed and made known in detail by His Son Jesus Christ. We not only advocate these doctrines to the world as correct, but every Latter-day Saint that has done the will of the Lord knows that these doctrines are true. Therefore, I say that the Latter-day Saints should be more careful and circumspect in regard to these things than any other people.

Our places of worship should be considered sacred and holy, for they are invariably dedicated to the Lord, and the movements of the Latter-day Saints in them should be pleasing to the Lord. We should enter them, remain in them and depart from them with circumspection and decorum. There ought to be a spirit of reverence for our houses of worship that is not always manifested by the Latter-day Saints.

We have come from the world. The Latter-day Saints that have been converted and gathered together were formerly Gentiles, as we consider them; and the example of the world, from which we have come, is, so far as places of worship and a proper appearance in them are concerned, worthy of the emulation of the Latter-day Saints. This house, perhaps [the Tabernacle] more than any other house of worship in Zion, is considered a sacred house. But ordinarily in our meeting houses there is a degree of liberty and freedom, and a free and easy feeling indulged in by Latter-day Saints that is sometimes offensive to the Spirit of the Lord. Especially is this the case among the young. I have thought that this has come among the Latter-day Saints because of our frontier experiences. Our meeting houses in the beginning—and up to the present in some parts of Zion—were used for a l purposes, for schools, for gatherings of a political character, for business purposes, for concerts, for theaters and the like; and it has seemed to me that the people of the world who come in among us must feel offended at the want of respect that the Latter-day Saints have for their places of worship. It is not desirable that Latter-day Saints should put on solemn countenances; that they should appear sad and sorrowful; put on hypocritical long faces, and pretend to be very religious and very sanctimonious. The Gospel of Jesus Christ does not require us to look sad, or to feel sad, or to make ourselves appear uncomfortable; but rather that we should have joyous countenances, light hearts and smiling faces. But I have sometimes felt that we have given ourselves too much to light-mindedness, and have been too careless in regard to our manners.

It is very desirable that we should not give unnecessary offense to the world, because we are preachers of righteousness, and are called upon to win souls to the truth. Therefore, our ways ought to be winning, not offensive, not disagreeable, not disgusting; so that the world, when they come among us, may not be unnecessarily offended; that they will observe us on the Sabbath day on all occasions and discover in us the fruits and effects of the Gospel—discover refinement, and moderation, and a proper appearance, every man being indeed himself, and not trying to make any very remarkable appearance, only to be natural, pleasant and affable; in fact, letting the Spirit of the Lord reign in every heart, giving joy to every countenance and grace and correctness to every movement in life, and restraining us from saying or doing anything that is wrong. At this late date in our experience the Spirit of the Lord ought to have its perfect work in the Latter-day Saints. It ought to be so thoroughly developed and have become such a fountain of light and inspiration in us, that it would restrain us from doing wrong and prompt us in doing everything that is right. It should be such a power in every individual that none of us would neglect our duties. It ought so to be with every father and mother, every brother and sister. It ought to be cultivated, talked about, considered, sought after and lived for. Families ought to vie with each other in trying

to obtain a greater supply of the Spirit of the Lord. It should be so fully in the heart that men would know on all occasions what they should do and how they should do it; know how they ought to perform their labors at home as well as abroad; how they ought to appear; when they ought to be seen, and when they ought not to be seen; how men should treat their wives, wives their husbands, parents their children, and children their parents.

This church now is over sixty years old, and we are measurably in a settled and fixed condition. We should be so thoroughly established in the principles of the Gospel that the fact should actually be seen and known. We should know it in each other, and we should follow each other's good example. Where we have a brother or a neighbor that outstrips us in his fidelity to the cause of God, we should want to imitate him; we should want a leaf from his book of experience, and we should want to profit by his good example. There is a large percentage of the Latter-day Saints who have had such a lengthy experience that it ought to tell in the community. We may be acquainted with neighbors and friends that we have watched perhaps during a generation.

We have followed their lives, and have noted their fidelity to the principles of the Gospel, their consistency and their regularity. They can always be relied upon. You will always find them upon the right side of every matter that is introduced; always, correct, always moderate, not boisterous, not pushing themselves forward. You do not see them possibly as quickly as you see others; but whenever you do discover them, you always find them on the right track and in the straight and narrow path that leads to life. Such men are not easily disturbed. New movements and operations that present themselves do not catch them easily. They seem to have become so thoroughly imbued with the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that they are not easily deceived. That is what ought to be with men of experience in the Church of Christ. The Spirit of the Lord in us ought to reign supreme, and when anything new comes along, if we cannot catch it at the first glimpse or moot, we had better wait a little and watch until the Spirit of the Lord shall direct us; for it is a monitor in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, to lead them into all truth, and it never leads in to falsehood. Whenever we go into falsehood it is because we follow some evil influence. The Spirit of the Lord never leads to evil; but it brings to our minds the truth. It reveals to us the truth of the present, and it opens our minds sometimes to see some truths that are yet in the future. But it never deceives, and never leads men astray. That is not its office. So that we need to give heed to that Spirit, listen to its voice all the time, and become acquainted with it and its operations, in order that we may not be deceived. The reason that we are still liable to make mistakes and to be deceived is because we have not yet attained to that degree of intelligence and light that we may obtain; and we have not obtained it for the reason that we have neglected our little duties. We have been careless, and not as earnest and as energetic in the performance of the