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## DISCOURSE

Delivered at the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, April 4th, 1897, by

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I have been invited by President George Q. Cannon to occupy a portion of the time this morning. There are many things which deserve the attention of the Elders, and which might be spoken upon during the Conference and will be probably, to the edification of the Saints and in the interest of the advancement of the work of the Lord. It is very gratifying to hear the report which has been given this morning by President Cannon concerning the labor of the Elders that are preaching the Gospel in the nations of the earth, and especially to notice the one leading feature to which reference has been made, namely, the mode of preaching the Gospel by the Elders in the United States and in some other parts of the world without purse and scrip.

The idea has prevailed for some time past, to a certain extent, until a little while ago, that it was necessary that the Elders should, in going out to preach the Gospel, provide themselves with money, in order that they might not suffer for the necessities of life. In consequence of the prevalence of this idea, for many years past the Elders generally have provided themselves with means as far as they could, and then their kindred and friends and the various quorums of the Seventies have furnished them means, to enable them to prosecute their missionary labors. To Brother Elias S. Kimball, now presiding over the Southern States Mission, is due the credit perhaps, as much or more than to any of the Elders who are presiding over missionary fields, for re inaugurating the former practice of preaching the Gospel among the people without purse or scrip. It is gratifying to know that in the Southern States, in the Northern States, in the Eastern States, and in the California Missions, and upon the islands of the sea—in fact, wherever this practice is observed, the work of the Lord is more prosperous, if possible, than it is anywhere else. The hearts of the people are reached, their sympathy is aroused, and they receive the Elders with greater kindness, and administer to them more liberally than they were wont to do when the Elders were depending for their support upon the means in their own pockets. I have always advocated the principle of preaching the Gospel "without purse or scrip." I recollect

making some remarks on this subject several years ago in this house, when my words seemed to recoil on my own head, for they did not meet with favor. In the course of my remarks at that time I advanced the idea that those men who possessed wealth whose sons were called out into the missionary field, and who were furnishing them abundance of means, were doing their sons irreparable wrong. We have evidences that the young men whose parents furnished them all the means they needed while they were out attempting to preach the Gospel are to-day without the testimony of the truth, and some of them have fallen away; whereas those who have gone out depending upon the Lord, having faith in the providences of the Almighty, have had developed within them a testimony of the truth and a knowledge of the principles of the Gospel which will enable them to stand firm and faithful in the Gospel so long as they continue to do their duty as members of the Church. I have a son on a mission, and I have advised him to put his trust in the Lord, and as far as possible exert an influence with his associates to do the same, and not to depend upon me for means, but to depend upon the Lord and the people among whom he labors. I would advise all those who have sons out in the world preaching the Gospel to exhort them not to put their trust in money, but rather in the Lord, and thereby prove the world, and labor wholly and solely for the salvation of men, having that thought uppermost in their minds, and not the thought that they have been sent out into the world to see the sights. I have labored in England on missions, and my experience while abroad proved to me that among the most useless missionaries sent out into the field were those who depended upon the means in their pockets for their support. They did not feel humble; they did not seem to put their trust in the Lord; they did not seek unto Him earnestly and diligently to obtain His Spirit; they did not feel in their hearts that burning desire for the salvation of the children of men that those did who were wholly dependent upon the Lord. I attribute the improvement that is observed in the various missionary fields to the spirit that has been awakened in the minds of the Elders to put their trust in the Lord, and to rely upon His kindness and providence while they are in the world. I have heard words of criticism, amounting almost to censure, of the rigid way in which Brother Elias S. Kimball had required Elders to put their money away and to put their trust in the Lord, and I have not felt to endorse that sentiment, for I have believed it was right. I do not believe there is any great blessing without some sacrifice—not the sacrifice

of principle, but the sacrifice of our own desires. It is a comparatively easy thing for a man with his pockets full of money to travel in the world. It requires no sacrifice to do this, no exercise of thought, no faith, no earnestness of purpose, no ardent desire in the soul for the salvation of mankind. But to go out among strangers, without means, dependent only upon the Lord, requires faith, humility, perseverance, and earnest desire in man, and it has a tendency to develop in them all these noble and excellent qualities which are essential to stability in the kingdom of God.

In conversation last evening with some brethren, some remarks were made respecting those who came in early days to this country pulling and pushing the handcart, and a comparison was drawn between that mode of immigration to Zion and the manner in which our people are gathered today. Did you ever hear of a man or a woman apostatizing that pushed or pulled a handcart across the plains? Did you ever hear of them becoming dissatisfied soon after they got here, and at once expressing their desire and intention to go back to the old country? If you have, it has been a rare exception to the rule. As a rule, and almost the universal rule, those who tramped the plains with the handcarts, and next those who came with the ox-teams, have been rooted and grounded in the faith. They had occasion to put their trust in God, and their faith was developed, their love for the truth was brought out, and they have been, as a rule, stable and steadfast in the Gospel of Christ. While today many who come from distant lands by steamship and by railroad, soon after they get to Zion become dissatisfied and discontented and they long for the leeks and the onions and the flesh-pots of Egypt; and frequently people who have emigrated here in that way have within a week from the time they landed in this city, or in other places, wanted to return, and some of them have returned. They came too easy; they did not gain experience in coming; their faith was not tried; they had nothing to develop within them the principle of integrity to the truth, and they were discouraged and wanted to go back at the least difficulty. Now, the Lord has said that he would have a tried people; and it is stated in the scriptures that the Lord chasteneth every son and daughter whom he receiveth. It is also said, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that God will try His people unto death, to see if they are worthy of the blessings of the Gospel of the Son of God. (Section 98:14.) I contend that a man is in a poor condition to endure the trials and temptations in the world who is not