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## DISCOURSE

*Delivered by President Geo. Q. Cannon,  
on Sunday, September 18th, 1892,  
in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City.*

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I will read a portion of the 4th chapter of the First Epistle of John:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

The Apostle says further:

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

In standing up to address you, I do so with a desire that I shall have the assistance of your faith and prayers. As we are often told, it is our privilege when we come together as we have done this afternoon to have the presence and the assistance of the Spirit of God, that the very things may be given unto us that are adapted to our various conditions and circumstances. I do not know your thoughts, nor your wants, nor the condition of your minds, nor your temptations or trials; but God knows them, and therefore He asks His servants, when they speak to the people, to rely upon Him, and he has promised if we will do so in faith that He will give

us that which shall be appropriate for the instruction and benefit of the people. Therefore, it is not necessary that we should prepare our discourses beforehand, because if we did that we would thwart the purpose of God and prevent the free flow of His Holy Spirit. We are commanded, however, to ponder upon the things of His kingdom, and he will give unto us at the very time that we need that which is adapted to the circumstances and conditions of the people; and we are also commanded not to speak unless we do so by His Spirit. It is a grave responsibility to stand up as a teacher of a congregation like this, and one naturally shrinks from it. But when we come together as we should do, then our minds are filled with light, and there is no one who has come to meeting in that spirit that will go away without being satisfied.

There is a great desire expressed by many when they hear the testimony of the servants of God, to know whether that which they testify to is true or not. The Latter-day Saints bear a very remarkable testimony when they address the world. Their Elders who go forth to preach the Gospel utter a good many sayings that are very hard for the people to believe, and therefore they frequently meet with great opposition. This is an age of enlightenment. I suppose there never was a generation which prided itself more upon its progress in every direction than does ours. We are the heirs of all the ages. All the truth that has ever been known to man is supposed to be concentrated in the breasts of living men in our day, not only religious truths, but truths of every character. It is therefore looked upon as a very hard saying, especially by the religious world, that God has again spoken from the heavens and restored to the earth the everlasting Gospel, and that the churches which are organized among men have departed, in many respects, from the ancient pattern. This wounds the self-love and pride of the world. They feel very much hurt at such expressions, and anger is aroused frequently in their minds because, as I have said, a great many believe that we are living in a very progressive age and in the full blaze of Gospel light. But the truth nevertheless requires that the statements which are made by the Latter-day Saints should be told.

Then the inquiry arises, How are

we to know that that which you tell us is true?

Some do not take the trouble to make such an inquiry as this, because they treat with contempt the message that they hear. They consider it unworthy of their attention. They look upon those who make these statements as almost crazy, and pass them by as utterly unworthy of their notice. But there are those in whom this inquiry arises, "If this be true, how are we to know it?"

All the churches that are now organized proclaim that they are true. Each sect claims to be the Church of Christ, and its ministers claim to be the servants of Christ. They claim that by entering their church in a proper manner salvation may be secured. And their effort is to make everyone believe this, and to throw aside all doubts concerning the efficacy of the plan of salvation as they teach it. We have in this city at the present time—I did not intend to allude to this in the commencement, but it comes to mind as appropriate—meetings to which the public are invited, and they are appealed to to forsake sin and to turn to godliness, and they are asked, as I understand, which church they wish to join—that is, those who are converted to the necessity of forsaking sin and becoming religious.

Now, according to our view, this is all wrong. There can be but one Church of Christ. There can be but one plan of salvation. As Paul expressed it, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"—not many Lords, not many forms of faith, not many forms of baptism. If we had the truth as it is in Jesus there would be but one plan of salvation, and but one path in which men and women would be required to walk in order to obtain salvation; and that path Jesus described as a straight and narrow path. That was the path in which He expected His followers would walk. If men have the authority to point out different paths, and to frame different plans and different ordinances, and to submit different requirements to the children of men in order that they may be disciples of Christ, then there is something needed to authorize these men more than is found in the Bible. Certainly, the Bible, which is the Word of God, does not warrant any such thing, and I believe Christians generally deny that there has been any revelation from God since