

MONDAY, 10 A.M.

Singing by the choir.

Prayer by Elder CHARLES C. RICH.

ELDER BRIGHAM YOUNG.

We have been highly edified during our meetings in this hall, and I am thankful for the privilege of meeting with the Saints in this beautiful building. It is certainly a great improvement upon those brush boweries that we once occupied, and even upon the old tabernacle that formerly stood in this corner of the block. If we are improving as Latter-day Saints in spiritual things, and in union in temporal matters, as we are improving in wealth, in architectural taste, and in all of those amenities that make life agreeable in a temporal point of view, no doubt it is well with us. I presume that we are advancing in the knowledge of God, and that we are preparing ourselves for a future life and exaltation in the kingdom of God. But when we examine ourselves closely, it is evident we are not making the progress in the knowledge of the things of the kingdom of God that we should make, as the representatives of the Almighty in this whole earth. Of all the millions of people that inhabit this globe the Latter-day Saints alone, so far as I know, represent the kingdom of God upon the earth, represent the great latter-day work—the restoration of all things—and are in possession of those ordinances which reach into eternity and which are of so vital importance to the future existence of all mankind. Do we truly realize the importance of the position we occupy? We have had revelation; we are receiving revelation constantly. God has placed us in a position that we may communicate with the heavens, that we may receive inspiration of the Holy Ghost and be actuated thereby in all the labors of this life. But in our daily avocations we fail frequently to enjoy the free flow of that Spirit that comes from above; our humanity too often steps in between, and when this is our condition we become more or less subject to other influences whose work is to deceive and lead astray. There is a principle of revelation which all Saints are required to understand and observe. It is not our province to have angels of God visit us, as they certainly did the Prophet Joseph Smith, when he laid out the broad foundation of the kingdom of God upon the earth. In his case their visits were actually necessary; for nothing short of direct communication with the heavens could have enabled him to do the work he did; in ours it is different. The foundation is already laid according to divine approval and the work of building fairly on its way; revelations communicating the will of the Lord have been given for our profit and general guidance, and it remains with us to carry it on to completion. But there is a principle of revelation in the heart of every Latter-day Saint which, if cherished and encouraged, is calculated to lead us safe in all the minor affairs of life; and we should live, and it is our privilege to so live, as to be operated upon by the influences of the Spirit of God through all our labors until the whisperings of that Spirit shall be constantly with us. Man is in a fallen condition; we realize this every day. He looks hither and thither; he casts his

eyes to the right and to left, and desires this thing and the other thing, and wishes and hopes to obtain them; and thus follows after those earthly possessions, paying heedless regard to more weighty things of the kingdom. Now, the principle of revelation should be in the breast of every Latter-day Saint; it should be there and continue to grow and increase and expand in the hearts of the people until they are thoroughly imbued with that Spirit. It will not come in a day nor perhaps in a year, nor in a series of years; it will take years and years of faithfulness on the part of the Latter-day Saints before their minds can be wholly and fully absorbed by the spirit of revelation, so that every thought and every act will be prompted by the influence of the Spirit of God. It is our duty to encourage that Spirit until it absorbs the whole being, until all our thoughts and actions shall spring from that pure source which comes from above.

Now, that our acts do not comport with this teaching at all times, I am aware; but it is expected of us to grow unto these things; and in order to grow unto them, it is necessary for us to take a course to nourish and cherish this Spirit in our every day associations and conversations, that nothing may obstruct the free flow of the Holy Spirit unto us.

We listen to many things that are pleasing to the ear, but which are not profitable to the mind. This should not be. The things of the world should have no place in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints. If I place myself in a condition to receive the things which are outside of this Church and kingdom; if I associate with people who have denied the faith and who acknowledge not God, who will not bow in obedience to the principles of the everlasting Gospel, and who are, say, spiritualists and infidels—if I associate with such men, I must to a greater or less degree partake of their influence.

Our associations have a great deal to do with either the encouraging or discouraging within us the principle of revelation. For instance, I hear of people calling themselves Latter-day Saints who make a practice of taking their wives and children to beer saloons, and while in such places they get so happy that they shout out the songs of Zion, and seem to enjoy themselves to a great degree. Does anybody know of circumstances of this kind? Yes; we cannot deny it. Who are these people? Are they Latter-day Saints? I should not think so, indeed; although to hear them sing one might be led to believe them the best of people, for they select the choicest of hymns, and they shout them out before men who make a living by selling intoxicating liquors. To my mind it is casting pearls before swine. Perhaps you may think that is a little strong; but that is the view I take of it. I am aware that all the people do not do this; I am aware, in fact, that they are very few, comparatively speaking. I am not censuring those people who do not do this thing, but there are some people who call themselves Latter-day Saints whose conduct in this respect is censurable. To associate with the drunkard is not the way to encourage the principle of revelation. Every Latter-day Saint is bound to encourage this principle if he desires to attain the blessings that accrue from the everlasting gospel. But there is but one way, one road, and the end thereof is life everlasting.

Now, what shall we do, Latter-day Saints? We are aware of the fact that society is sadly mixed up in this city; and that every engine and power of

darkness having a tendency to win away the hearts of our sons and daughters, and to allure the weak-minded is at work endeavoring to lead them down to destruction. These local affairs should engage our attention until these evils are rooted out from our midst. And let the line be drawn between those that live their religion and those that do not. The very best way to show them up in their true colors is for us to live our religion and let people see by our works that we are for God and his kingdom.

My prayer is—and I presume it is the prayer of all Latter-day Saints—that God will inspire our hearts to do right, to walk in his paths, and help us to overcome evil with good. Let us have charity. I believe in charity, I would like to have more of it; but I do not consider it is charity for me and mine to indulge in the society of those that are apostates, that are wicked in their hearts, and will deny the covenants which they have made before their Father and God. I do not think it is charity for me to throw pearls before swine. I believe in charity, and at the same time I believe in entire exclusiveness, so far as mixing up my interest and striking hands with the unbelievers is concerned.

That God may help us to cultivate and develop within us the spirit of revelation, until every thought shall be inspired from on high, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH.

While listening to Brother Young, my mind reverted to one or two passages in the early revelations given to the Church, which would seem, from the testimony we have had from him, to be somewhat applicable at the present time as well as at the time the revelations were given, and I thought I would refer to, and perhaps read a few of these passages, so that we can reflect upon them ourselves. [The speaker then read from the first to the tenth verse of the revelation given to Joseph Smith June 22, 1834, page 377 of the new edition of Doctrine and Covenants; also from a revelation given December 16, 1833, first to the nineteenth verse, same book, page 349.]

I realize that I am speaking to people that have joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and as members of that Church, profess faith in the Gospel as it has been revealed in this dispensation. It would seem, sometimes, almost superfluous to keep preaching upon these plain and simple principles, which all ought to understand and be anxious to carry out. Nevertheless we find it necessary, and therefore we continue to preach, expound, exhort and to plead with the people, our brethren and sisters in the covenant of the Gospel, to keep the commandments of God which they have covenanted to keep. The Lord keeps pleading with us; he has to forbear with us, to extend mercy, kindness and forgiveness day after day. For we are very forgetful, careless, indifferent and thoughtless of our duties. It is only when the Spirit of the Lord is upon us that we can really sense the responsibilities that we are under to God and to each other. When we are engaged in the daily avocations of life our minds are occupied with other things; we are thinking how to make means, or get wealth, how to provide for our necessities and to make our families comfortable. These thoughts take possession of our minds and exclude reflections upon the commandments of God which we have covenanted to keep, and which, by keeping, we would avoid all the errors,