

## ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

Once upon a time I had occasion to make purchases for the fitting up of rooms for office work.

## NOT CONNECTED UP—A COMPARISON

I went into a large electrical establishment, there to select electroliers, push buttons, switches, bells, and annunciators. I was confronted with a splendid display of these appliances. The salesman, up-to-date in matter and method, drew my attention to the excellence of this or that piece, and showed me how well the push button provided for the wall would go with that particular hanging, or the bell that he recommended. I stepped to the button and pressed it, but, lo, there was silence. I turned a switch to see how the light would glow in the frosted globe, to which my attention had been drawn with many commendatory remarks from the salesman, but there was no light. I knew the reason, but I gave myself the pleasure of having him explain. He said: "You see these things are here for show, they are not connected up." After having made my selections I smiled over the incident as it came to me in mind, and I said: "How like some of the institutions of men—beautiful to look upon, gilded, studded, ornamental, sometimes simple and oftentimes lavish and ornate, but not connected up."

## INSTITUTIONS OF MEN

Men may form institutions as they like, provided they have but good purpose in so doing, and may do with those institutions, within the limits of propriety, whatever they choose, and they may even call such institutions churches—for there is no patent on the term—and these being churches that men have made, they may be handled as men choose. So I have no fault to find at all with men or institutions who are suggesting changes in their creeds, or modifications of what have been regarded as their fundamental doctrines. They made those churches, and they can do with them just as they like. They have named them appropriately; most of the names are expressive, honest, frank and truthful; and men may do what they like within the limits of reason and ordinary propriety with things that men have made.

## BEWARE OF FORMS WITHOUT POWER

Someone has remarked that there is a difference between the form and the substance. I only need to remind you of the admonition that Paul gave unto his associate in the ministry, Timothy, to be in turn given by the younger missionary to the people: to beware of the form of godliness without the power thereof. Read it for yourselves in II Timothy, third chapter. There is a context there to which I would like to call your attention, for I believe it has application in this day:

"This know also," wrote Paul, "that in the last days perilous times shall come.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful unholy,

"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good,

"Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

Do you not think that Paul was a prophet? Was he not a seer in fact? Was he not able to see this day, these last times? He sums up his admonition in the next verse:

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

#### THE GOSPEL GIVEN BY REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

We read that in the wonderful manifestation of the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, to Joseph Smith in this last age, in the spring of 1820, the Lord Jesus Christ made that same comment, or declaration, concerning the many opposing, quarreling, contending sects of the times, whose creeds he pronounced an abomination in his sight; for, said he, "they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." With marked appropriateness Bishop Nibley this morning drew attention to a passage in the 84th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Such part of it as he cited, he quoted exactly. The context, however, is interesting to consider, beginning with the 19th verse, the Lord having spoken of the real meaning and significance of the Priesthood, which is the power to speak and to act in the name of God, declared;

"And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

"Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

"And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh."

Now, as I have started on Scripture reading, and I can not give you better doctrine than that we find recorded in the written word, I turn for a moment to the letter that Paul wrote to the saints in Galatia, some of whom had become careless and negligent after his departure, so that he had to remind them of their duties. He said:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:"

Then he went on to explain:

"Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other

gospel unto you than that ye have received let him be accursed.

"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

But I ask you, note particularly the verses following, justifying what may otherwise appear to be severe, if not caustic, words:

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

"For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

#### PREACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN

We proclaim our adherence to the principle of toleration. "We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may." Some have fancied that there is a little inconsistency between what we have called the liberty of the gospel and such admonitions as that of Paul, which I have read unto you; but there is no inconsistency. Who were to be accursed? Those who preached any other gospel than that which he had preached unto them, for the gospel he had preached unto them was not of men; it had been given by revelation; and he preached it, as he had a right to do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now he was referring to those who were on the inside, people who were going about amongst the Saints, many of whom, perhaps all of whom, claimed some standing with them, preaching a false doctrine and setting up a false gospel, and upon them he pronounced the anathema of cursing for presenting their own conceptions and their own views as the revealed word of God. Were such not deserving of a curse? Was it not deception of the most serious kind—preaching as the doctrines of Christ what was nothing more than the theories, the precepts and the commandments of men?

#### THE SIN OF PREACHING WITHOUT AUTHORITY

If you wish to preach these things as the precepts of men, all well and good. Let those who will, listen to them; but to preach such and affirm that they are the doctrines of Jesus Christ, unless they are in harmony with the doctrines of Jesus Christ, is blasphemy. This Church stands for the gospel that Paul preached. It is the gospel of all times, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and it has been preached in the world since the days of Adam, though there have been long periods of darkness, due to repeated apostasies, when the people have turned away, loving Satan more than they loved God, and making it impossible for the gospel to be widely proclaimed. But it has been given to the earth, again and again, through the different dispensations, which have been special conferments and bestowals of authority by the Lord for the carrying out of His purposes.

Do you not remember that the risen Lord, in giving his last

instructions to the apostles, told them to go into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost? Who dares take unto himself authority to officiate in those names, the names of the Holy Trinity, if he has not been duly commissioned? Who would dare undertake to speak in the name of the Governor of this sovereign State if he were not duly commissioned? The prison bars are ready to open to receive such a one. It would be a crime under the law of the State. Who can speak in behalf of an officer of the law, if he has not been properly deputized, if authority has not been delegated unto him? Now, why shall we use one rule of common sense in dealing with the things of earth and a rule that is not in accordance with common sense in dealing with the authorities and powers of heaven?

#### THE AUTHORITY OF ANCIENT TIMES NOT SUFFICIENT FOR TODAY

When the Lord established his Church amongst the Nephites upon this continent, he told those who were chosen and ordained, unto whom authority was given, just how to administer the ordinance of baptism. They were to say: "Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." That does not give us in this age any such authority. The words that Christ spoke unto his apostles of old would be no authority unto the apostles today, nor unto any of the elders of the Church. I repeat, the words that he, the Lord, spoke unto the disciples who were chosen from among the Nephites would be no authority unto us; but in this day and age he has spoken again, and has given that same power and authority to speak in his name, and to administer the ordinances of the gospel, after the pattern that he has set; and therefore the elders and priests who take candidates, who have professed their faith, and who have repented of their sins, into the waters of baptism today, declare that they have authority given them; and, being commissioned of Jesus Christ, they baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Many have assumed that men may administer these ordinances of their own accord, though such assumption is opposed to all reason. In the early days of this Church, when many were trying to get in, some wanted admission because they had been baptized in other churches; they had received the ordinance called baptism; and the Lord spoke definitely upon the matter. Read the 22nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein he said unto the people in that day:

"Behold, I say unto you that all old covenants have I caused to be done away in this thing; and this is a new and an everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning.

"Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the law of Moses, neither by your dead works.

"For it is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old."

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HAS AUTHORITY AND IS CONNECTED UP

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Church its name declares it to be, and the authority and power of the holy Priesthood is in it, without which there could not be, cannot be, shall never be, a Church of Jesus Christ true to the name. I thank the Lord that we have learned that truth, and that we belong to a Church that is connected up. Amen.

## ELDER J. GOLDEN KIMBALL

*(Of the First Council of Seventy)*

Every man or woman who is called to a position of this kind has a great desire to be guided and influenced by the Holy Spirit. I have had a great deal of experience during my life in a public way, but never at any time did I feel more uncertain and doubtful as to my success in speaking to the people than I do at the present time. I have all kinds of experiences in talking to people. When I thought I had the Spirit of the Lord, some of the people did not think so. So that you can never tell; and if you say there is such a man living upon the earth, however inspired he may be, or however good a man he may be, who can please and satisfy all people, I question whether that man ever lived. I know mighty well I am not one of them.

Now my brethern and sisters, there is not a man in this vast congregation more happy to be with you than I am today. I am a native of Utah, I was born here, I have lived here, and I have never crossed the waters. I have heard from time to time, since our last conference, some who were non-"Mormons," some who were non-residents of Utah, and some of our own rising generation, speak very lightly about what President Brigham Young said when he entered this valley, "This is the place." Well, I am here to say it is the place, and I just came from California, too.

This vast congregation, as I understand it, consists of representatives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There may be representatives, and are, from every stake of Zion, and you have come up here to be awakened, to be aroused—not that you are told anything special that you do not already know. I cannot think of a thing that I ever heard that will be new to you; but if you can be awakened and return to your people and arouse them, then this has been a great conference. I had that feeling while I was away. I have not had as much physical force as I desire. I am a little low on vitality. I run out of gasoline every little while.

Now, the brethren of the authorities have been very kind to me; they have been very considerate, and I am very appreciative. I have a letter that I value more than gold and silver, signed by the Presidency of this Church, and they closed their letter to me saying: "You have our love, our confidence and our blessing." I do not know whether I am appreciative, I think I am. The Presidency never will