

## AFTERNOON MEETING

The meeting commenced at 2 o'clock in the Tabernacle, April 7, 1928.

President Heber J. Grant presided.

The congregation sang, "How firm a foundation."

Elder Heber S. Allen, president of the Taylor stake, offered the opening prayer.

A solo, "Lift thy heart," was sung by Harold H. Bennett.

## ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

I pray that I may have the Spirit of the Lord to direct me in what I shall say this afternoon. It is my desire to address my remarks particularly to the officers and teachers of the Church—those who have been called to responsible positions in the Church and who have a voice in the choosing of instructors in the priesthood quorums and the various auxiliary and other organizations of the Church.

## TEACH AS DIRECTED BY THE SPIRIT

I shall read a few verses from section forty-two of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel.

"And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit.

"And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if you receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach."

We are inaugurating in the Church this year, a little different system in regard to the teaching of members of the Church, and I think it is an improvement through which all the members may have the opportunity to receive instruction in the principles of the Gospel as these things are presented unto them by these elders, priests and teachers of the Church, according to the word of the Lord in this revelation.

## FAITH A NECESSARY QUALIFICATION

The matter of teaching is one of the greatest importance. We cannot estimate its value when it is properly done; neither do we know the extent of the evil that may result if it is improperly done. Whether in the Church schools, the seminaries, auxiliary organizations; or in the Priesthood quorums, the greatest qualification required of a teacher is that he have faith in the principles of the gospel; that he believe in the principles of revealed truth as they have come through inspired prophets in our own day as well as in times of old; and that he shall exercise his privilege as a teacher in the spirit of prayer and faith.

I am in full accord with the commandment as it is written in this revelation. Unless a man does have a knowledge of the truth, has faith in the word of the Lord and his power, and is guided by the Spirit of the Lord, he should not teach. We are commanded "to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life." For we "shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

In this day of wonderful educational privileges and opportunities for the gaining of knowledge, as the world understands it, we may feel that the greatest thing required of a teacher is that he possess a liberal education. It is very essential that men with the responsibility that teaching brings, be educated; that they have knowledge in a general way; but it matters not what a man's training or what his schooling may be—how many degrees he holds—if he has not faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ and has no testimony received from the Spirit of the Lord of the divine truth which has been revealed, he is not qualified to teach in any organization within the Church. Sometimes those who are serving as Bishops and Presidents of Stakes, and in other leading positions, I fear, may overlook this fact and in the choosing of teachers in classes, as teacher trainers, or wherever it may be, think of the man's educational qualifications as they would be looked upon in the world and forget the spiritual and doctrinal qualifications which are more essential. A teacher should not be called primarily because of his schooling, or educational attainments, without taking into consideration his humility, his faith and his integrity to the cause of truth which he is supposed to represent. This training does not come through the study of science, art or literature, but through prayer and faith and the promptings of the Spirit of the Lord. It cannot be stated too forcefully that the man or the woman without faith in the gospel as it has been revealed in the day in which we live, should not teach. The Lord has made it very emphatic.

#### MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH SHOULD BE PROPERLY TRAINED

This is a very important age in which we live, and our message and our authority in the world are the most important things in the world. The souls of members of the Church are just as precious in the sight of the Lord as are the souls of the people in the world unto whom our missionaries go with the plan of salvation. In fact, if a choice is to be made, a soul already in the Church—one who is in the Covenant—is just a little dearer to the Father, if possible, than is one who is on the outside. Of course, the Lord is no respecter of persons, and all souls are precious in his sight, but he no doubt loves those who obey his voice and who are willing to walk in his truth, more than he does those who fail to do so. We should spend our time and give diligent attention to the training of members of the Church. Teachers who are filled with the spirit of the Lord and who are tried and true, should be called to act in this capacity, and those who are

not so tried and proved, should not be called to instruct the members. What do we accomplish if we spend our time and means preaching in the world to make converts to the gospel, if we place instructors before the youth in the stakes and wards who destroy the faith in the hearts of the young people in the divine message intrusted to our care?

#### SAVING PRINCIPLES

A man may have a wonderful education and not be on the road to salvation. It matters not if a man is acquainted with the principles of science, history, literature, and all the branches of education as they are taught in the schools of our land, these truths, of themselves, will not save him in the kingdom of God. He must have in his heart the spirit of faith in the mission of Jesus Christ; he must understand the principle of repentance; he must understand the principle by which the remission of sins may be obtained, which is baptism by immersion by one having authority. In fact, he must understand all of the first principles of the gospel and obey them. These truths are fundamental to salvation. If a man has not complied with these principles and received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and obtained entrance into the kingdom of God, he is not on the road to salvation, no matter what else his knowledge may be. The great learning he obtains in the world will not save him.

#### FULNESS OF TRUTH PROMISED TO FAITHFUL

All knowledge is helpful, all truth is a part of the gospel, but the Lord has given us some fundamental laws, truths by which his kingdom is governed, and we must be in accord with these principles of truth and these laws, and understand them if we would be saved in the celestial kingdom. Having possession of these truths pertaining to our salvation, we may add to our knowledge. Eventually a man will be under the necessity, if he becomes perfect as the Lord prayed and taught in his sermon on the mount, to understand all truth. Things are taught in a fragmentary way now, but we will know them in full sometime when we receive the greater light and understanding after the resurrection. Our knowledge does not end with this life. We will continue to progress in eternity, and all things will be revealed unto those who are faithful in this life in keeping the commandments of the Lord. The Redeemer has said:

"The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth.

"And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

"He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things."

#### SEEK MEN OF FAITH AND TESTIMONY

We learn in the scriptures, then, that there are fundamental things which we must understand, and laws which we must obey, if we would find our way into the celestial kingdom. Now I speak this way to impress upon my brethren, the Bishops and Presidents of Stakes, and

others, the necessity of hunting for men as teachers in organizations within the Church who have a firm testimony and who live in full accord with the word of the Lord. Men who are filled with the spirit of faith, who understand the principles of the gospel, and who make them a part of their lives and who spend some of their time in prayer and fasting.

#### THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Let me read from another revelation:

"Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained?

"To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth.

"And then received ye spirits which ye could not understand, and received them to be of God; and in this are ye justified?

"Behold ye shall answer this question yourselves; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto you; he that is weak among you hereafter shall be made strong.

"Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth, or some other way?

"And if it be by some other way it is not of God.

"And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

"If it be some other way it is not of God.

"Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?

"Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together."

#### HOW TO AVOID DECEPTION

Again the Lord has said, speaking on this question:

"And again, I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations—

"Wherefore he that prayeth, whose spirit is contrite, the same is accepted of me if he obey mine ordinances.

"He that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek and edifieth, the same is of God if he obey mine ordinances.

"And again, he that trembleth under my power shall be made strong, and shall bring forth fruits of praise and wisdom, according to the revelations and truths which I have given you."

Satan is abroad in the land, deceiving the nations, and he will deceive us unless we are firmly grounded in the faith, unless we base our salvation on truth, unless we search for gospel knowledge and understanding. The Lord has required of us, as he sets it forth in many of the revelations given to the Church, that we should search the scriptures, and make ourselves familiar with the teachings they contain. If we will do this then, we will not be led astray by every wind of doctrine and foolish teaching of men in the world, but will have power to understand and discern between truth and error and choose the right, avoiding that which is wrong. Every member of this Church has it within his power to know the truth, so that he may not be deceived. This knowledge will come to us through our

study, through faith, through perseverance, and through living in full accord with the ordinances of the gospel.

May the Lord bless and guide us, I pray, in all things, that we may be steadfast in the truth in these days of peril, these days when there are so many false doctrines prevailing in the world and men are striving to destroy the fundamental teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we stand firm and faithful in the spirit of prayer, the spirit of faith and with a perfect testimony of the truth, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER RULON S. WELLS

#### *Of the First Council of Seventy*

I have been greatly impressed by the spirit of this conference, and with the fact that the Lord has set his hand to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the inhabitants of the earth in the day and age in which we live. It is, indeed, a marvelous and wonderful work that was portrayed to us so beautifully, in the meeting this morning, by Elder Orson F. Whitney. It has been accompanied by the most miraculous occurrences, and it is not a great wonder that many people have questioned its truth.

We are living in a day of agnosticism, a day when there is but little faith among the children of men. The great thing in connection with these miraculous occurrences is the introduction, among our Father's children, of those principles and doctrines that have within them the power of God unto salvation.

What is the work of God? We read in the opening paragraph of the Bible:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

Thus began, according to Holy Writ, the great work of creation; and there followed the creation of man in the image of God.

What is God's work, of which we speak as this marvelous work and a wonder? It is the great plan of life and salvation. God created the heavens and the earth, and we look up into the starry heavens, with wonder and amazement at the grandeur and the glory of this universe in the midst of which we live. We see the blazing sun at noonday and our hearts are thrilled with the wonder of it; and we learn of the motions of those heavenly bodies and our hearts are filled with amazement and wonder at the glory of this wonderful creation; and we ask the question, Whose work is this? We may read the answer in the opening verse of the Holy Scriptures: It is the work of God.

But is that all that is contemplated in this great work of God? Is that the great thing that God has in mind? The Lord spake unto