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I sincerely trust, my brethren and my sisters of the radio audience, that I might have an interest in your prayers and faith this morning as I stand before you to express one or two thoughts.

GRATITUDE FOR BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL

As I listened to the Lord's anointed, yesterday, there came into my heart a feeling of profound gratitude—gratitude to my forebears who left the Alps of Switzerland and the villages of England and came to the valleys of these mountains where their posterity might enjoy all of the blessings and gifts of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am profoundly grateful to them because it has brought me under the direction of the Lord's prophets. And anyone who listened to President Grant's message yesterday couldn't help feeling that he was speaking to us as God's mouthpiece and servant. It is my firm conviction and testimony that if all of us will heed the advice and counsel of these men who guide and direct the destiny of this great work that God will sustain us and bless us through all the vicissitudes, trials, and tribulations of life.

As I grow older, I become more convinced in my heart and spirit that this is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. One evidence to me that it is his work, is that the Lord is not only mindful of those who live, but he is mindful of those who passed on without having had the opportunity of hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh. The Lord ordained his Son to be the judge of both the dead and the quick. David, who transgressed sorely, understood fully that there would come a time when he, too, would have an opportunity of repenting and enjoying the good will of our Heavenly Father. He said:

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Psalms 16:9-11.)

BAPTISM A NECESSARY ORDINANCE

With the advent of the Savior upon the earth, there came to him one of the learned Pharisees, Nicodemus. Nicodemus was interested in the miracles the Savior performed, and finally out of the discussion that ensued, the Savior said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus could not understand this statement. Thinking that once a man had been born of woman that was enough, and then to clarify the statement the Lord said:

... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:5, 6.)

The Savior here laid down the mandate of baptism that applies to every son and daughter of the Lord that is born in the flesh, that if they expect entrance into the kingdom of our Heavenly Father they must be born of the water, or baptized of the water, born of the spirit or baptized of the spirit. This declaration was so important that the Savior himself submitted to the ordinance of baptism. We all recall the time when John was baptizing by the Jordan and then cometh Jesus from Galilee unto John to be baptized of him, but John forbade him saying:

... I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him. Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Matt. 3:14-17.)

Christ not only inaugurated the initiatory ordinance into the kingdom of heaven, but he also placed upon his followers the mantle of authority. For said he this to Peter:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matt. 16:18, 19.)

Then there came Calvary Hill when the Savior of the world was crucified between two sinners, and upon the cross he conversed with one of these men, Christ making him this promise:

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. (Luke 23:43.)

This statement has been confusing to the Christian world, in view of the fact that the Savior said unto Nicodemus, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (*op. cit.*) There is no question but that the thief had never heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ until the Savior preached it to him on the cross, and yet the Savior promised him that he would be in paradise; the world in its confused thinking believes that paradise is heaven. The Apostle Peter clarifies this misconception of paradise when we read his statement found in I Peter:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God

waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (I Peter 3:18, 19, 20.)

After the Savior was resurrected and meeting Mary, he said to her, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father . . ." (John 20:17), which is an indication to us that during the time his spirit and body were separated, he was in paradise, preaching the gospel message to those who, as Peter tells us, sinned in the days of Noah and were swept from the earth by the great flood.

Another very important statement with reference to baptism was made by Paul when he was preaching the resurrection. He said:

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? (I Cor. 15:29.)

CHANGES MADE THROUGH APOSTASY

Thereafter, according to prophecy, there came the great apostasy. It was only a matter of a century or two after the apostles had disappeared from the earth until the ordinances and doctrines of men were substituted for those of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words of the old prophet Amos were fulfilled wherein he said:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. (Amos 8:11.)

We find one of the world's greatest ecclesiastical leaders making this statement in a book that he wrote, the book written by Cardinal Gibbons called *The Faith of Our Fathers*, wherein he said that the ordinance of baptism was changed from that of immersion to sprinkling for convenience's sake. Said he:

There are those who are ill. There are those where there may be but little water found, consequently there being little water it is right to sprinkle them, and that sprinkling is just as efficacious as immersion.

The important thing is that this great ecclesiastical leader admits that baptism was by immersion just as Christ indicated, and as he was baptized by John the Baptist, and as he indicated to Nicodemus, that if a man must be born again he would have to be born of the water, completely submerged and come forth, symbolical of the birth.

With the apostasy there came into the world many doctrines. There came into the world erroneous doctrines that there is no place in the kingdom of our Heavenly Father for those who have not heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; but the Lord said in the beginning he ordained his Son to be the judge of not only the living but also the dead. The world has lost sight of this concept, and the great churches teach the following:

There is nothing any human being can do to change the condition of the dead. After one dies there is no more that can be done or that he can do.

Another one declares:

Don't believe we can help those who have died, neither believers nor nonbelievers; no ordinance for the dead that recognized intercession for the dead as well as for the living. Man cannot help those who have died. We have no form of work for the dead. After the death, the judgment.

Another one:

We are powerless to do anything for those who are dead. Don't believe in any form of work for the dead. We are powerless to aid those who are dead.

I am sure that if these great religious organizations understood the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, they would not declare to the world nor to their followers that nothing can be done for those who have passed on. Without having heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and those who have not submitted themselves to the ordinance of baptism, they would have us believe that they are lost forever and ever.

Then Cardinal Gibbons makes another rather pertinent statement in his book (*op. cit.*) wherein he said this:

For if baptism by immersion only is valid, how many sick and delicate persons; how many prisoners and seafaring people, how many thousands living in the frigid zone, in the depth of inclement weather, though craving the grace of regeneration would be deprived of God's seal or receive it at the risk of their lives. Surely God does not ordinarily impose ordinances upon us under such a penalty. Moreover, if immersion is the only form of valid baptism, what has become of the millions of souls in every age and country that have been regenerated by sprinkling of water in the Christian churches?

PROMISES OF THE RESTORATION FULFILLED

When the Lord, through his servants, predicted that there would be a famine for his word in the land, knowing that men would change the ordinances and substitute their own, he also gave the world a promise that the day would come, as he said, when:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Mal. 4: 5, 6.)

That promise has been kept. John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery upon the banks of the Susquehanna River bestowing upon them the Aaronic Priesthood, the same priesthood that John the Baptist held when he baptized the Savior. They immersed one another just as Christ was immersed by John the Baptist. Later there came three other heavenly beings, Peter, James, and John, who bestowed upon these men the Melchizedek Priesthood, that priesthood which Christ himself bestowed upon Peter and his associates, giving them the right to bind on earth and to bind in heaven and to loose on earth and it would be loosed in heaven.

Elijah conferred upon Joseph Smith the keys of this great work,

the work for the dead, wherein children perform the ordinance of baptism for their dead progenitors, which is a vicarious form of work just as was Christ's atonement for the sin of Adam of a vicarious nature wherein he represented all of us upon the cross. Furthermore, President Joseph F. Smith in 1918 indicated that he had been caught up by the spirit and was permitted to see what was going on in the spirit world. The sight he beheld was one wherein the brethren were preaching to the spirits in paradise just as the Savior nineteen centuries ago in spirit form preached them the gospel. By performing the ordinance of baptism here in proxy form for the dead, there are no obstacles in their way whereby they might embrace the gospel in its entirety though they be in paradise. I wish to declare that with the appearance of Elijah to the Prophet Joseph, the restoration of the priesthood, baptism for the dead, and the preaching to spirits as President Joseph F. Smith indicates, constitute an answer to Cardinal Gibbons with reference to those who have not been born of the water and the spirit, as the Savior indicated to Nicodemus a man must needs be before he can enter the kingdom of heaven. Think, if you will, of the millions who have died without the performance of this ordinance and the acceptance of the gospel during the period when the gospel was not upon the earth. To me it is only justice that our kind Father in heaven would institute a plan whereby all his children, be they alive or dead, might have the privilege of accepting or rejecting the gospel of his beloved Son. I could not worship a God who would permit some of his children to enjoy the blessings of the gospel and deprive others who for some reason or another had not heard the gospel because of some circumstances over which they had no control and were denied the privilege of accepting it. I do not believe in that kind of a God, and neither do you. We believe in a God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer, to bleed, and die to the end that everyone of us might enjoy salvation and exaltation in his kingdom.

This is the philosophy of Mormonism, a plan of salvation so broad that it provides an opportunity for everyone of the Lord's children to gain entrance to his kingdom as was prescribed by the Savior to Nicodemus.

This is my testimony to you, and I am grateful beyond words of expression to know that I enjoy membership in God's Church, the same Church that Christ established upon the earth with apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers, for the purpose of teaching us the gospel in its fulness and to the ultimate end that we may all come to a unity of faith. And we may come to a unity of the faith if we abide by the counsel given to us by the Lord's anointed, and that unity of faith will exemplify to the whole world the destiny of this great organization—a destiny of leadership to direct men from the paths of error into the paths of truth, salvation, and exaltation, which I pray will be the blessing of everyone of the Lord's children, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.