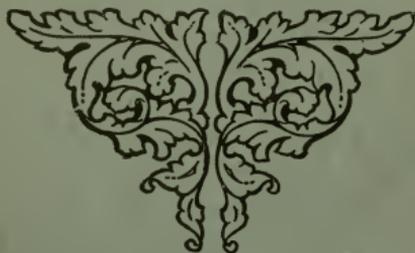


*Joseph F. Smith jr*

# Eighty-Fourth Annual Conference

OF THE  
Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day Saints



Held in the Tabernacle and Assembly Hall, Salt Lake  
City, Utah, April 4, 5, 6, 1914, with a  
full report of the discourses

Published by the Deseret News  
**Twenty-five Cents**

with prospects of living no one can tell how much longer, when he was at the point of death. And also the late President John W. Hess of Davis County. It fell to my lot to go and ordain him a patriarch when he was thought to be lying on his death bed, that he should take the office with him. He arose from his bed and blessed his numerous family, as I understand, almost every soul of them, and then he went from ward to ward and blessed the people in whole, all that would gather to hear him. He raised his hands and put blessings upon their heads after he had been at the point of death. We want to bear these things in mind and acknowledge the hand of the Lord, and when we offer up prayers and acknowledgments to the Lord, let us gratefully remember the good that we have received at His hands. Don't let us forget, don't let us lose our faith, don't let us wander from the straight and narrow path that leads to life, but be sons of God, serve and honor Him with all our might, mind and strength, to our latest day.

May the blessings of the Lord be upon gathered Israel, upon the people in these valleys, these splendid valleys, and upon the presiding officers in the Church, that they may be blessed, that they may be healed when they are afflicted, and have the same experiences that we have had before, be healed and restored, that our lives may be perpetuated and extended, while the Lord finds it profitable for us to live. God bless you. The Lord bless these brethren, presiding brethren that have come up here, and who come up twice a year to worship the Lord and receive instructions. God bless you, my brethren. God bless the brethren in all the wards and stakes in Zion; and the Lord bless our sis-

ters in their labor and ministry as ministering angels, those that have been chosen and have sustained the work of the Lord, and have joined with their husbands and brothers in carrying forward the work of the Lord in the heat of the day. They have borne a great responsibility. They have borne the sons of men, the souls of men in this earth, and have builded up the kingdom. They are entitled to all honor and credit and blessing.

We pray, Father, that Thy Spirit may rest abundantly upon these gathered people, and upon all Zion, and upon the honest in heart, the conscientious throughout the earth, the friends of the Latter-day Saints, those that have the courage to speak a good word in our favor, for we deserve it, we need it, and are entitled to enjoy it. May the blessings of the Lord be upon us always, I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### **ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS.**

The Gospel again revealed, the same in all ages—The Bible a "measuring stick"—The fruits of "Mormonism" prove its divinity—The Gospel manifests the mercy and justice of God—New revelation confirmed by the old Scriptures—The glorious principle of salvation for the dead.

This certainly is an awe-inspiring sight, to see this large building filled to its capacity, hundreds of people being obliged to stand.

I can say that I never in my experience was able to see more clearly the beauties of the Gospel, to feel its truth more keenly, or to realize more fully its saving power than at the present time. I rejoice exceedingly in the knowledge which I have of the Gospel, in the testimony I have of its truth, in the blessings which I have received therein. The

Gospel which the Lord has revealed to us, through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, is the same that was instituted before the foundations of the world, and has in it the power of God unto salvation, unto all those who will receive it and obey its laws and precepts. It is the same Gospel which was revealed by the Lord to Father Adam and to Enoch, and to Moses, Abraham, and others of His prophets. It is the same that was taught by our Savior, and His disciples of the primitive church. The Scriptures tell us, "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and the Apostle Paul, in addressing his epistle to the Galatians, declared that "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." The deduction which I draw from these declarations is that, though there are many religious denominations, there is but one true Gospel, and that scriptural doctrine is one of the strongest evidences of the true Gospel.

Our elders go out into the world with the Scriptures, the Bible, as the measuring stick recognized by all Christians, remembering the saying of the prophets, "to the law and to the testimony, for if they speak not according to these it is because there is no light in them." They teach the doctrines which the Lord has revealed to us in these last days, and they bring forth the Bible, and invite men and women to a comparison, and it is discovered that the doctrines taught by the elders of

Israel are identical with those taught by Paul and his associate apostles, and by the Savior Himself. These comparisons accompanied by the Spirit of the Lord, have the result of convincing and converting many honest souls, numbered by the thousands, who have been willing to forsake their sins, their former faith, their friends, their occupations and all for the Gospel's sake. On the other hand, our elders, by a study of these truths, and comparison of them with the Scriptures, have had their testimony strengthened and established, so that such a thing as one of these elders being led to embrace any one of the religions of the world is almost unknown in the entire history and experience of the Church, in the preaching of the Gospel, and there have been many thousands of elders engaged in that work.

There can only be one true Gospel of the Redeemer, according to the Scriptures, having in it the power of God unto salvation, and we have strong evidences that the Gospel which we teach is that particular Gospel. On one occasion the Savior gave a test by which false prophets might be discerned; said He:

"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. \* \* \* Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

We have in the New Testament the teachings of Jesus and of His disciples, who are recognized by all good Christians as good trees, figuratively speaking, and the fruit borne by them is good fruit, and we prove to the world that these fruits and

the fruits of "Mormonism," so-called, are identical. It only requires an investigation to reach this conclusion, an unbiased, unprejudiced, sincere investigation. Finding that the fruits of the Gospel, as taught by the Latter-day Saints, are good, we must accept the tree which bore them as being a good tree.

The Gospel has not always been upon the earth; it has been here in part at times, and sometimes, perhaps, wholly from the earth, the authority to preach it, and to administer its ordinances, having been taken away. In view of the fact, recognized by men and women of the world everywhere, that millions of our Father's children have lived when the Gospel was not upon the earth, who have died without a knowledge of the truth, without a knowledge of God, without a knowledge of the Savior; for religionists to teach the doctrine that faith in Jesus Christ is necessary to salvation, and then deny the provision which God has made for the salvation of those who have never known of the Gospel, to teach that all those who do not confess Him, on any count whatever, are lost and damned, such teaching is a heresy abominable in the sight of God, and of honest, thoughtful men and women. Through the teaching of such doctrines many, no doubt, have been led in to infidelity and atheism, and others have been made to think of God our Father as a monster of injustice and without mercy, rather than the loving, merciful Father that He is.

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is founded upon the rock of revelation, Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone, as it has been predicted that it would be. The superstructure is composed of truth,

eternal truth, and righteous principles. There is no shade of evil, or deception in it, and it will withstand the winds, the rains and floods of vituperation, of vilification, of falsehood and persecution, with which it may be assailed, because it is founded upon the rock. God is at the helm in this great work, and He has made provision for the salvation of all His children who will be saved. There are no inconsistencies in the plan of life and salvation as it has been revealed to us, and it all tends to glorify our Father in heaven, demonstrates His divine attributes, and proves that He is a just, a merciful and a loving Father; for, notwithstanding that millions have died without a knowledge of the truth, there are provisions made that they shall hear and have the privilege of obeying it.

The Scriptures tell us that, "until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law." The Gospel of the Master is the law by which all mankind must and shall be judged, and of necessity it must be taught unto all mankind or they could not be judged by it.

This Gospel having been revealed to us from the Lord direct, not given of men through their wisdom, and what they could glean from the Holy Scriptures, it is to us the known truth. It is not founded upon the Bible, that was not the source of inspiration of the Prophet Joseph. When occasion arises, as it often does, in regard to the interpretation of certain Scripture, because many plain and precious truths have been taken from the Scriptures, as the prophets declared they would be, and because of mistranslations, we go to the Word of the Lord as it has been revealed to us, and learn the truth, and then refer to the scripture

of the Bible and reconcile that scripture with the known truth, and we are not in darkness, but constantly in the light. So that the Gospel, as we have received it, adjusts apparent discrepancies of the Scriptures, and makes plain the way of life. We understand what was meant by Jesus going, while His body was in the tomb, and preaching to the spirits in prison, as Peter says, "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

And so with the ordinances of the Gospel. Faith is necessary unto salvation, a condition, and yet it is not the only condition, for the laws and ordinances of the Gospel must be obeyed.

"We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel," and not without; and, "we believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are, first, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, repentance; third, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost;"

These are but the first principles. Priesthood, endowments, sealings, etc., are necessary to salvation, and the Gospel provides that these ordinances shall be administered in behalf of the dead, by proxy. It is for this purpose that temples are built by the Latter-day Saints, genealogies of the dead procured, and the ordinances performed, the same for the dead as for the living. If when the Gospel is preached to those who are dead, they accept of it, and the vicarious work done for them, the work done will be binding and of force, and we become "saviors upon Mt. Zion" through having

done that work. If the dead reject the work done for them, it will be of non-effect for their salvation, just as the atonement of our Savior redeems us from our sins if we accept Him and His atonement, and obey Him, but if we reject Him, and what He has done for us, that which He has done for us, so far as atoning for our individual sins is concerned, profits us nothing. Even when we have received these ordinances our salvation is not secured, we must go on to perfection, adding to our faith virtue, virtue being a condition necessary to salvation; and to virtue knowledge, knowledge being another condition; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity, which latter is the pure love of Christ. We have the promise of the Lord that if these things be in us, and abound, our minds will not be barren or unfruitful of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to know whom is life eternal.

God help us to be true and faithful to these principles, I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

"An Easter Song" was rendered by the choir, Rose Smithen and Carl Samuelson sang the duets.

#### **ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY.**

The Power of God and the power of man—Illustrative anecdotes—Prejudice against the miraculous—What doubt leads to—The marvelous work and wonder—Individual testimony the strength of the Church.

There is an old saying to the effect that men are but children of a larger growth. I was reminded of this saying yesterday morning when President Smith declared that there are men, a few, in this community,