

SERMON BY ELDER HEMAN C. SMITH,

At Lamoni, Iowa, April 15, 1894.

Subject, FAITH AND PRAYER.

AFTER reading the eleventh chapter of St. Mark, from the twelfth to the twenty sixth verses inclusive, the speaker said:—

The principal objection that I had to addressing you this afternoon was this: I feel intensely interested in the purpose for which we have agreed to pray, and to have my mind turned from the subject of prayer and the responsibility of addressing you placed upon me, was somewhat objectionable; but I have thought that if I can so talk to you this afternoon that our minds may not be turned from the subject under consideration—that the matter presented may be in line with the purpose for which we have agreed to supplicate the name of God, it would be better for you and for me. I therefore call your attention to the last part of the twenty-second verse of the chapter I have read; "Have faith in God."

Now I presume that if I should stop there and simply recommend to you that you have faith in God, there would be no difference of opinion—perfect unity would obtain upon that proposition. I am sometimes told that the whole Christian world agree in regard to this, and if we would stop there we would be in unity with all who profess the name of God everywhere. Were we to simply declare that faith is necessary there would be entire unity, but the moment we take another step and begin to talk about the effects of faith, then there is division; so we cannot be in unity, it seems, so far as faith is concerned if we consider it in its effects. We shall not be able this afternoon for want of time and ability to thoroughly canvass the subject before us. There is much connected with it that you and I have learned; there is doubtless more connected with it which we have not learned. It becomes us to-day so far as we are able, however, to exercise faith in God, and a few observations as to how we are to exercise that faith will not be out of place, I trust.

I presume that our first thought in connection with this is that we ought to believe in our hearts that God will do just what we are asking him to do, and if we can with all the intensity of our minds believe that, if in approaching him we may believe that he will do all that we require at his hands, if there is no doubt, if no fear enters our hearts, we will feel that we have made advancement and that we are getting near to the throne of God; and yet it seems to me that if we exercise that kind of faith only, we are far from what we ought to be.

If I rightly understand the subject of prayer and the subject of faith in God, it is not a belief that we may bring God to us; it is not the conviction that we may so move upon him that in his love, and mercy, and kindness he will come to our rescue, meet us where we stand, and provide for our supposed necessities; faith in God, it seems to me, would rather inspire us to have such confidence in him, such a firm belief in his goodness, that we would go to him. I do not expect by our prayers to-day or at any other time to be able to make God more willing than he is now. I do not expect that the voice of this multitude crying unto God from their hearts will be able to change him, for I am told emphatically in his word that he never changes; that he is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever; that he is without variability or shadow of changing. If then his purposes were determined upon before we began our prayer, those purposes still remain. All the supplication that we can make will never change him at all, for there is no shadow of changing with him. Nor do I anticipate that in our supplications we shall make him better disposed toward us than he was when we began, that we will change his disposition in any regard; for if I could believe that we could change his purpose, his disposition, and make him more willing to bless, I could not have confidence

in him as God. Then what are we praying for? Why are we supplicating the throne of God to-day that we may obtain necessary relief from the crisis in which we are placed? Why do we come and humble ourselves in fasting and prayer, call upon his name to ask that certain things may be done? Not to bring him to us, as I understand it, but for the purpose of bringing ourselves in a condition where these things may obtain. We are not now in the condition where the things we desire may obtain, is the trouble, or we would have them. Our prayers should be for the purpose of bringing ourselves into that condition, into that relationship with God where the effects desired may be felt by us. That is what I have thought, for the last few years, is the reason why we pray. It is not for the purpose of enlightening God in regard to our wants, for we are told that he knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him; knowing what we have need of and being disposed to bless, we have nothing to gain so far as moving him is concerned. Prayer is the medium through which we approach God, not changing him and bringing him nearer to us, but changing us and bringing us nearer to him. That is the point; that is why we humble ourselves before God; that is why we deprive ourselves of necessary food that we may be very humble and that our minds may be in a better condition to feel the effect of that living divine presence which he is always ready to bestow upon us.

We feel the effect of this principle somewhat in communication with each other. When I talk with some men I feel the effect of their minds upon mine. You know how that is, how free you feel sometimes in conversing with some men. Their very presence gives you liberty; you feel that you would not reserve anything from a man like that; your spirit and theirs are in perfect rapport; there is not a secret in your heart but what you will unbosom to a friend like them but immediately you turn and talk to some one else and you feel entirely different, feel that there is something within your mind that you will not reveal; you put up a fence around you and say, "You can stay outside so far as I am concerned; I don't propose to let you into my thoughts nor give you to understand my condition at all. I will close my mind against

you." The difference is this: that this mind is not congenial; you may not have anything in the world against the man; you may not be able to point out anything in his character that will be objectionable to you; he may have manifested just as much disposition to befriend you as the other; but you don't feel the same. You know how that is; I can't tell you why, but it is.

And for this reason we pray, for this reason we try to get ourselves in such a condition of mind that we can approach God, that we may draw into his immediate presence and feel the effect of his mind upon ours, lifting us up from our present condition into the light of God, so that the conditions may be favorable and what we pray for may be possible because we occupy a condition where the effect may be produced upon us. As long as we do not approach God in prayer and draw into his immediate presence so we may feel his power and his love, these things will never come to us, no matter how much we may say our prayers. Sometimes we simply say our prayers as we were taught when we were little children, when we knelt by our mothers' knee and lisped the name of Jesus. We used to call it "saying our prayers" and it was, and we say them yet sometimes; but it don't amount to much. Before we can pray effectually we must have our whole soul drawn out towards God; the mind, the heart must be tending towards him, rising above present conditions and the effects of things surrounding us and feeling the influence of his mind upon ours. That is what we are trying to do to-day if we can understand it. We don't want God to come to us and meet us in our present condition of things and relieve our wants and provide for our necessities: if we did, it would not do us any good. I will tell you why. If he came to us in our present condition and manifested as plainly as words could make it what he desired at our hands, we would not comprehend it. We would be unable to grasp the thought that was couched in the words that were used; in our coldness and lack of spirituality we would not be able to understand his will any better than we do now. But if we can go to God instead of expecting him to come to us, and prepare our minds so that the divine light of heaven may

shine in them, we shall be able to comprehend God; and then when he speaks, when the power of God rests upon us, we will know what he means by what he says. We want to get where we can understand the mind and will of God. I don't care anything at all about an inspiration that simply comes to me in word only and leaves me in the condition I have been before; I don't want a revelation of God's will that is simply telling me what I should do or believe, and then leaves my mind in a condition that I cannot grasp the thought. The kind of revelation I want is in the mind; I want to have my mind inspired, enlarged, that I may grasp the truths of eternity.

Robert G. Ingersoll was not far out of the way when he criticised the position taken by the world, when they talk about inspired truth. He said truth did not need inspiration; that a truth was no more true after it was inspired than it was before. He said inspiration was needed for a lie that it might look like truth. I don't believe a truth is any more a truth after it is inspired than it was before, and I don't think that the words "inspired truth" mean anything. We don't want inspired truth so much; we want inspired minds to comprehend the truth; that is what we need at least. That is the kind of revelation we want to-day more than anything else; and if God shall see fit to speak to us and manifest his will, if he shall in the goodness of his heart say to us the words we desire to hear, may God grant that with that power of revelation, with that declaring of his word, may come the power of comprehension, may come the influence of God's Spirit that will enable us to know the mind and will of God, to see the law as God has revealed it.

It is quite possible to my mind that the reason why we do not understand better what we have received than what we do is, because we have not drawn near enough to God, because we do not move in that atmosphere of intelligence and inspiration and light that will enable us to understand what we read. There is considerable significance in the question asked by different ones in times of the past, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" That is the point. We have revelation from God, much more perhaps than we can comprehend. True, we need more in regard to some things, we

need the indication of God's mind in regard to what place God designs his servants to fill and who shall occupy the several positions or offices that now are vacant; but we need more than anything else the inspiration of God's Spirit in our own minds. In fact, we don't want simply that God shall inspire the prophet to speak to us. While that is a thing necessary, while it is a thing provided in the law of God, while we cannot well do without it under our present conditions, for God must according to his plan reveal to us his will through the prophet from time to time; but we do not simply want the word of God as given through him, but we want to arise to those divine heights, higher than our natural minds will take us, and be inspired with that intelligence that we can comprehend the word and law of God, that we may put it in practice, and that it may be useful to us.

That is the reason why the Lord said we should enter into our closets and pray. If I were to stand here before you to-day and pray to God, that prayer would be just as acceptable to him if the conditions were the same, if the mind were the same, the prayer would be as effectual as if I was shut in my closet and was praying there alone. But the difficulty is if I undertake to pray here with these influences disturbing me, if I undertake to address the throne of God, and am thinking about what is around me, I am partially hindered in the exercise of my faith in God. For this reason God said, Go into your closet and shut the door; it don't matter so much about you being inside and alone as it does about the world being outside. Shut your door that the influences that otherwise would affect you in your prayers may not disturb you there. There with no thought of those around you, with no other minds affecting yours, you can more effectually draw out your heart and soul in prayer to God, and while you pray you may feel the influence of the Divine mind upon your own to better effect than you can when surrounded by the multitude. No thought then of hypocrisy can take possession of your mind; you won't take into consideration whether your neighbor indorses your prayer or not, but you will pray there where no eye can see and no ear can

hear but the ear of him who reigns above; there will be a communication established between you and the Divine mind that will raise you up to be nearer like God, bring you nearer to his standard. You don't go in there for the purpose of bringing God to you; you don't go there for the purpose of making the distance less by God coming down or approaching nearer to the condition you are in, but for the purpose of approaching nearer unto him that the distance may be less because of the fact that you have changed and God has not changed. I believe it is possible if you have approached God aright to pray acceptably in the multitude; I believe when you have thus communed with God and received strength from God you can go anywhere and pray, but I am of the opinion that no man ever prayed acceptably to God in public until he had first learned how in secret.

And now there is another consideration in connection with this; and that is, Will we be satisfied? Have we sufficient faith in God to be satisfied if we do not get what we ask for? Some people think they have a great deal of faith in God, and we sometimes misjudge people's faith in this: If a man is continually manifesting what we call the gifts of the gospel, if, in every gathering with which he assembles, he speaks in tongues or prophesies or has some wonderful thing to relate in regard to what God has done for him, we say, "That is a man of strong faith," but another man, perhaps one who does not make any display whatever, goes along discharging his duty, and perhaps he may never have spoken in any tongue but what he has learned, and that very imperfectly; he never prophesied in the name of the Lord; like John the Baptist he does no miracle, he doesn't amount to much in the eyes of some people. Now to my mind the latter character may have the strongest faith in God; in fact it seems to me a betrayal of weakness that we all the time require him to certify to us that he is true or else we won't believe. Unless every day or two, or week or two, or from time to time God manifests himself to us and by some marvelous thing certifies to his character and says to us unmistakably, "I am true and my work

is true," we begin to doubt. That betrays to me a lack of faith. You want him to keep coming and testifying all the time to you that he is all right, or else you go back on him. That is the point. It is a good thing to have these manifestations where we need them, and be in such close union with God that whenever we need the power of God to sustain us it may come; that whenever a communication is necessary through us to the people we may be able to speak in the name of the Lord; but to be in a condition that we will get weak and begin to drop out by the way if the Lord doesn't keep certifying, "I am here, I am all right, I am standing by you," I don't have much confidence in that kind of faith.

Now if we have once been satisfied that the work is of God, if we have become so well satisfied that it is true that we have cast our lot with this people, and we have endeavored to do our duty, discharge the responsibility that is placed upon us, have we got faith enough to proceed right along and do that work whether God is speaking to us or not? That is the test. Have we got faith and confidence enough that we believe that God will bring out this thing all right, and that the work will triumph, and that the cause of Christ will be victorious in the by and by, though we may walk in darkness? That is the kind of faith we want. I would rather walk in the light to be sure, I would rather be in the full blaze of God's glory all the time; but I don't know as I would be as well off; I would not learn so much obedience, and reliance, and trust, as I do when I pass through these dark places; when I feel that I cannot reach out and take God by the hand as readily as I would wish; when I feel that he is at a distance from me; when he is not coming to my rescue. If, then, in the hour of darkness I can still go on unwaveringly trusting in him, saying, "I know that God is true and in the by and by it will be all right, I will bear this trial; I will pass through this cloud with resignation, and trust, and confidence;" that is the kind of faith I want.

I don't know whether God looks at it that way or not, but it seems to me that he would almost get out of patience with us if it was possible for him to do it, if after we had abundant evidence that he was true, we would keep telling him

"Now, I want you to give us another testimony, I'm not satisfied, give us another revelation of thy will that we may know that God is with us," and keep on asking every day, "Now you tell me again about this or else I'll lose my faith and fall," to me it betrays a weakness.

Another thing: Have we that faith in God that we will leave all things in his hand and let him dispose of them in whatever manner he may, and if we don't get the thing that we want but get something else, will we be satisfied? In my opinion that is a point we want to consider right here. It is possible we have all made up our minds about what we are going to get; we have probably outlined to some extent about how the Lord will speak if he speaks at all. Are you going to be satisfied if he speaks some other way and if he reveals directly or indirectly in opposition to your plans, your purposes, and the line that you have marked out for him to walk in? Are you going to be satisfied? Now if a man has the right kind of faith, if he has the faith that brings him into communion with God, he is, in a sense, saved already. I am told here in the word of God in the third chapter of John, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

I understand by this that faith will save a man. If that passage of Scripture teaches anything, it teaches that men can be saved through faith. Some of us may deny that, and we have the right to deny it in one sense, but in another sense we have not. If I believe anything in regard to the gospel of Jesus Christ I believe that faith will save a man; and if you have represented before the world, any of you, that the Latter Day Saints do not believe that a man can be saved through faith, there is one man you don't represent. I believe he can. Why, I am told here in the word of God most emphatically that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish but have everlasting life. I cannot deny that; and further than that

I have the statement made here in the word of God in the sixth chapter of John and forty-seventh verse, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." He has everlasting life when he believes; no need to wait for it. He may wait until it becomes more mature, and until this everlasting life that is in him now may develop conditions more favorable than at present, but he has it now if he believes. If you have faith in God to-day, you have everlasting life. Man, then, as Paul has told us, is evidently "saved by grace through faith." I will not deny a statement like that; I believe in my heart that a man may be saved by faith. But it must be the right kind of faith; it must be the genuine faith—that faith that draws a man into close relationship with God; a faith that will change the man; not a faith that expects God to change, to come to man; but the faith that changes the man, changes him from his present condition into a condition nearer like God. It has such an effect upon his character, his mind, and his life that he is no longer the man he was before; he becomes a new man in Christ. Old things are passed away and all things become new. I don't believe this old man can be saved, this natural man; but I believe that the new man in Christ can be saved, by faith operating through him. It will make him a changed man, a different man; and when he becomes a different man, a man of God, and the old leaven is cast out, then he is saved.

And the effect of this faith is this: it not only changes him in one respect, but in every respect necessary. It makes him more willing to do right than he was before. When he is changed through the effect of faith he no longer desires to do wrong, he no longer takes pleasure in wrong; he scorns that which is evil, and the very composition of the man is such that he loves the right, loves virtue, loves truth; and he is so nearly like God in his mind that he becomes like God in his ways; and he is so transformed that he does God's work, keeps the commandments of God. That kind of faith will save a man; you need not doubt that. In fact, faith and works are so closely combined that it is an impossibility to separate them. A man cannot have genuine faith in God without working. What is it to have faith in God? What

is it to change and become like God, or to approach to the character of God? He works, doesn't he? He not only worked at one period of his existence and called the world into being, but all the time he holds watchcare over the works of his hands. All the time he is governing and directing; all the time he is supplying us with the sunlight of heaven and the ingredients in earth and air that are calculated to benefit and bless us. If we are like him, change ourselves and become like God, then we shall be in a condition that we will desire to be all the time employed; employed in that which is good, in that which is grand and noble.

I want to call your attention to two passages of Scripture, in which, if you separate faith and works there will be a contradiction, if you unite them there will be harmony; In the seventeenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Paul's epistle to the Hebrews where Paul says, "By *faith* Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son." When he offered up Isaac he did it by *faith*. What does James say about that? "Was not Abraham our father justified by *works*, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"—the same thing. Paul says he offered him by *faith*; James says he was justified by *works* when he offered up Isaac. There is a difference between these men here, or else the two terms mean the same thing when they are properly used. Speaking of the same event, where Abraham went upon the mount and offered his son Isaac, one says he was justified by *works* in that act, the other said by *faith* he offered up Isaac. They are inseparable; that is the point; faith and works are inseparable. They were both represented in the one act of offering up Isaac.

And again James says: "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" She was justified by *works*, says James. Paul says, "By *faith* the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." The same event again; one calls it *faith*, the other calls it *works*. There is either a contradiction between these men in regard to faith and

works, or else faith and works mean the same thing in some sense. James will give us a little more light upon that perhaps. "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" That is it. Faith is not perfect without works; by works was faith made perfect. It is a very imperfect kind of faith that has no works connected with it. It may be good as far as it goes, but imperfect faith will not bring men to perfection certainly, for imperfect means cannot bring about perfect results; and faith without works will never render the comers thereto perfect, neither will works make a man perfect without faith; so by their works is their faith made perfect, so that imperfect faith will never save a man, but a perfect faith will save men.

Here allow me to introduce as illustrative of my meaning an excellent definition of faith by Joseph Parker, D. D.:

"I do not limit faith to the acceptance of a few theological propositions. To me, faith is not a clever trick in religious metaphysics; nor is it some faculty on which priestism plays its tyrannous and selfish pranks. It is not a transient mood in the conjugation of life's throbbing verb which theologians have created for their own uses. What faith may be to others I know not. They may have stripped it and wounded it and left it half dead; or they may have cruelly murdered it, and buried the nobler portion under altars that would crumble at the touch of reason; or they may have cut away the tokens of its strength, put out its eyes, and sent it to turn the millstones of sectarianism and bigotry! I know not to what base uses it may have been put; but to me, faith is reason glorified; faith is the sublimest action of the soul: . . . faith is inspiration; faith is the very life of the soul; faith is the hand that lays hold on God. And its human side is as beautiful as its divine aspect; it moves the heart to grand philanthropies; its kind eyes are evermore lighted with their truest tenderness when they look on sin and misery, helplessness and despair. True faith drives out selfishness; the true faith stirs to sacrificial action; true faith sees in every man the image of God."

The faith that we are required to exercise will bring men into that condition of life where they can enjoy throughout

eternity the results that they are seeking for. This does not apply simply to the ordinances of the gospel either, my friends. It does not mean that faith is made perfect by being baptized and having hands laid on you; that is, obeying the gospel and becoming a member of the church; but it means that in everything if you have faith you must lead a life in harmony with it. If you believe in God you must do the works of God. If you believe in the revelations of divine truth, you must be true. If you believe in God, and can form any idea from the record of truth what his character is, make your character conform to that character, and as you read in the word of God that God is love, so you must be a being that is filled with love, your life must be in harmony with your faith, and all enmity, all that is low and groveling, must be cast out of your nature that your works may make your faith perfect. You can never do that, you can never have your faith in the love of God made perfect until you have cultivated love in yourself, and so long as you hate or have any disposition to harm any of the creatures of God, your faith in God's love is imperfect. Works will make your faith perfect. As I have often expressed myself, God did not require us to love our enemies simply for the purpose of benefiting the enemy. We could not always do that if we would. Our enemy would not allow us to benefit him. We may offer to do him a kindness but he rejects it; we may do all that lies in our power to lead him from darkness to light, but he turns away, and if that was the purpose in our loving our enemies, the purpose would be frustrated. It is not the leading purpose, not the sole purpose; but the purpose in God requiring us to love our enemy was that we might be benefited ourselves by the effect of that love. Whether we shall ever reach the man with love or not, whether the effects will ever do him any good or not, it purifies our own soul, makes us better than we could be without it. And so in regard to every other characteristic of God. We have faith in God, we believe him to be a God of knowledge, infinite knowledge, so we must try to increase our knowledge, and our faith will be made perfect through works. We must do everything that lies in our power to learn of the things worthy to be known. We

must not only read the word of God, but must pray constantly and keep our minds humble enough and in subjection to God's Spirit sufficiently to be inspired to understand the word of God, that our knowledge may be increased and we become more and more like God.

We read that God is longsuffering, and so must we sometimes suffer long. We read that God is kind, so must we be kind, that our faith in the kindness of God may be made perfect by our works by the preparation we make in ourselves by our schooling. We believe that God is patient; so must we be patient. We believe that in God are all the attributes that are set forth in the word of God. Being so qualified, with all those graces in us, our works will perfect our faith. But if we are praying to-day and retaining all the evils of our nature, we have doubts, we have suspicions, we have hatred, we are groveling in all that debases man rather than elevates him; and our prayers won't amount to anything. He is not changeable; we want to change ourselves—that is what we are praying for; that is what we want to do; lay aside all that is out of harmony with God and use the means to become nearer to God, and then we can feel all the effects we desire and have all the blessings we need under our circumstances.

We choose conditions here for everything that is under our control. We plant the flower where the conditions are the most favorable, where the soil is best adapted to its growth; we plant it where the sunlight will fall upon it with the best effect, where the moisture from heaven may add its effect upon it; and so must we be planted if we would bring forth the best results, in the condition where it is favorable for our growth and development; and to-day while we pray, we want to plant ourselves in that condition and under those circumstances where the light of heaven may shine upon us, and where the will of God may be made manifest to us, in consequence of our being in a condition to receive it, because we are under circumstances where the disposition of God to bless may take its effect, where the power of God may be felt to our relief and our elevation and our enlightenment, that our prayers will not be in vain.

If you thought it did you any good to go without breakfast this morning—that God was pleased simply because you did not eat, you made a mistake. If you continued to fast, not taking the nourishment of life because you thought God was pleased with that sacrifice alone, you made a mistake; but if the effect of that fast has

humbled you, if the effect of depriving your body of the nourishment of life has to some extent so affected your mind as to humble that mind, your fast has been of some consequence to you. If you have thought that you had sufficiently fulfilled your promise to fast and pray for the revelations of God to-day when you went into your closet somewhere alone and kneeled down and said your prayers you made a mistake; but if when you have gone to that place you have been there for the purpose of shutting out the things of the world so they would not affect you; if you have had the divine part of your nature drawn out towards the Divine Mind above, got right in the current of God's love so that it would meet you there and affect you and bless you, then your prayers have been of some account. That is the reason why we pray; that is the purpose of it; that is why we exercise faith in God, believing that he is right, and that where he stands is the place to go. We have sufficient faith in God to get where he is, as near as we can; and we cannot get perhaps exactly in the condition we would like to be—but *we will get just what we are prepared for; it doesn't make any difference how much or how little that is, just what we are prepared for we are going to get; just what we are worthy of God is going to bestow—and in his mercy he will extend it as far as possible.* But we may never expect to be blessed, as I have said before, by praying for the purpose of bringing God to our ways, bringing God to the place we occupy, and asking him to come here and help us out. He will help us just so far as the conditions of our mind are favorable—so far as we have placed ourselves in that humility before him that we can feel the effect of his love and the effect of his power upon us; thus we will be raised and brought into nearer relationship with God.

May God in his infinite mercy and love help us that we may be changed, help us to change; help us to lay aside the old man with his deeds, and thus purify our hearts; and become nearer like God, that we may understand God; and becoming nearer like God, we may be in a condition to comprehend all that he has in store for us, that our condition may be improved thereby. That is the reason why it is said that a man cannot know God except it is revealed to him by the Son, Jesus Christ. That is the reason why it is said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Christ is of God; Christ is beyond the comprehension of

mortal man; and until man is inspired, until he is changed from from the condition he is in by nature, until the Divine Mind has wrought its effect upon him so that he becomes more than man naturally can be, he cannot comprehend Christ, he cannot know Christ.

It is a very shallow doctrine that we hear in the world, that you cannot know Christ unless you have seen him. To see Christ may be a privilege, but it does not amount to much so far as making you a witness is concerned. If he stood there and you saw him as men in ancient time did, you would not know him. You might be attracted by the wisdom of his utterance, but you would not know it was the Christ. You might believe that he was some great man, that one of the prophets had risen from the dead; but you would not know it was the Christ. But when once the power of God has moved upon you, when you have felt the inspiration of God's Spirit, that Spirit may testify of Christ, that Spirit may comprehend Christ, and to you may come the same condition of things that was promised the disciples of old when the Master said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." When the Holy Ghost has come upon you, you will be witnesses of him—not before. Though you may see, and hear, and associate with him, as did the people of old, you will never know him but by the power of the Spirit, by which you can be made a witness of Christ and comprehend the things of God. To me it is not only necessary that God shall reveal his will through the one whom he has appointed, but it is actually necessary that we should pray and humble ourselves that all Israel might be inspired and that we might arise to grander heights and sublimer thoughts, and when we do get into a condition to receive, God in his very nature cannot withhold that that naturally and legitimately belongs to the condition we occupy.

May God in his mercy help us to pray aright and humble ourselves to become more nearly like God, approaching his divine throne until we shall drink from the pure spring of heavenly inspiration; and that this people may arise, shake off the shackles that have bound them, and be free in Christ, is my prayer.

(Reported for the *Herald* by Belle B. Robinson.)