

IGNORANCE AND LOW CONDITION OF THE WORLD—PAST EXPERIENCE, PRESENT POSITION, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE SAINTS

A DISCOURSE BY ELDER JOHN TAYLOR, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY,
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Recorded by G. D. Watt, J. V. Long

In listening to the remarks made by President Kimball this morning, I felt myself very much edified, very much instructed, and very much blessed. In fact, where the Spirit of the Lord is, and the oracles of God dwell, there must of necessity be truth, intelligence, and certainty. Many of those things, as he justly remarked, that seem light and trivial, and of little importance to many, are pregnant with meaning, are full of interest, and are of the utmost importance to the Saints that dwell in these valleys, and to the world of mankind, if they would only pay attention to and be governed by them.

Mankind are, more or less, fond of paraphernalia, show, pomp, and parade; but the kingdom of God does not always come with “observation,” as the Scripture says. The great and precious principles of eternal truth, like pearls and precious gems, are often hid from the view of the human family.

What is the reason that the world of mankind do not appreciate the principles that are so plain and so manifest to us? How is it that all of our friends, relatives, and associations, and the neighborhoods where we have resided have not fallen in with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Why is it that all these things have not been received and appreciated by the millions of the human family who have had precisely the same opportunities that we have had? It is because they

do not appreciate them—because they cannot see and understand. The light shone in darkness and it comprehended it not; but to those who received it, it was life and salvation.

Why is it that a swine cannot discern the value of pearls, and tramples them under its feet? Because it does not understand—it has not the intelligence, and does not comprehend the difference between the filth that surrounds it and precious gems. You might cast a precious jewel at a hog, and it would turn and rend you; but throw that to a man of understanding and intelligence, and he would ask for more. That is the difference. God has so ordained that, “strait shall be the gate, and narrow the way that leads to life; and but few there are that find it.”

If the men of the world, if the princes and potentates of the earth, if the statesmen and great men among the nations could comprehend things as we comprehend them, could understand the Gospel as it has been revealed to us—if they could know anything of our high calling’s glorious hope, and of the principles that animate our bosoms, they would, many of them, lay down their honors and their thrones, and come down and ask for admission into this kingdom. But they have got to receive the kingdom of God like a little child, just the same as you and I, or they cannot enter it; they have got to enter by the door into the sheepfold; and