



EDUCATION

AN ADDRESS BY PARLEY P. PRATT, DELIVERED AT THE FOURTEENTH WARD
SCHOOLHOUSE ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1853

Reported by G. D. Watt

My friends—As we are assembled on this occasion, I desire to speak upon the subject of education. I consider that we never lived in a more important time than we do now. The Lord has something for every member of his Church and kingdom to perform, for he has a great work to do. I consider that every faculty we possess should be called into action; and this work is so important, that no time should be lost. Hence we see the necessity of schools, that we and our children may be prepared to perform all that the Lord requires of us. What kind of a qualification is necessary for us to perform this work? The first thing necessary is for us to obtain the good Spirit of the Lord, and then keep it. Without this we cannot do much good. If the Lord wants a railroad built, or any great manual labor performed, which the Saints are not yet able to do, he inspires the nations of the earth to perform the work, as they have the means to do it with, notwithstanding the nations know not God, neither do they serve him. We are not prepared to do the work of God acceptably, unless we keep his commandments. In order to enjoy his Spirit, we must pursue a course of life that will meet his approbation—we must do the things that God requires of us. The people may be looking for some mysteries from me today; but the older I grow, I feel to be the more simple. What are the means ordained of God for the benefit of our

children as well as ourselves? I do not now refer to the obeying of the ordinances of the Gospel alone, for that we all know to be necessary for both ourselves and children. But what were those means laid down in 1830? We are informed in the commandments and law of the Church given unto us, that, “It is the Teacher’s duty to see that the Church meets together often, and also see that all the members do their duty.” Do this people do this? No. Our children are or should be all members of the Church, for they should be baptized at eight years of age; but do they meet together often to pray and speak one to another, or even all the parents of children? They do not. Then they do not do their duty. All officers in the Church are Teachers, except the Deacons, and they are Assistant Teachers. Who should be exempt from meeting together often, if any exceptions should be made? It should be the mother with her nursing infant, who cannot go. All others should meet together often; and when they come together, the Teacher that presides should see that each one takes a part in their turn and do their duty. Can the Teacher find any member, either parents or children, that don’t pray. If so, he can find those that do not do their duty; for when you were baptized you covenanted to keep the commandments of God, and he has commanded us to pray. Yes, each member should take a part. Which of you can find a