

TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT, &C.

A DISCOURSE BY ELDER ORSON PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE, GREAT SALT
LAKE CITY, APRIL 8, 1860.

REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.

Having been requested, this afternoon, to address the congregation, I cheerfully do so, praying with all my heart that the Lord may grant unto me his Holy Spirit, that whatever I may say, whether much or little, may be dictated by that Spirit that proceeds from heaven, and then it will be right.

We read in the New Testament that the Apostles and righteous men in days of old preached the Gospel by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. I do not know of any way by which the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be proclaimed with any beneficial effect, except in this manner.

We can arise before a congregation of the Saints and make use of the principles of the Gospel in our own words. We can say to the people, Repent. We can call upon them to believe. We can tell them concerning baptism, show them the nature of it, and the causes for which it was instituted. We may tell them concerning the Holy Ghost, and preach many things in the wisdom and language of man, and yet all this would not be acceptable in the sight of Heaven, unless we were dictated by the power and gift of the Holy Ghost. Our words would have no effect upon the hearts of the people; they would not be edified; the speaker would not be edified: no good, perhaps, would be accomplished.

The world, during the last seventeen centuries and upwards, have been engaged in preaching what they termed the Gospel; they have been engaged in preaching many principles that are true; they have preached many of the first principles, such as faith and repentance; they have preached the ordinances and institutions of heaven; they have reasoned with the people; they have portrayed many great and glorious truths before the people; they have called upon them to receive those truths, and yet they have taught without authority—without that Spirit that giveth utterance—taught without being called of God; and hence their teachings have not accomplished that which an inspired man's would have accomplished, when sent of God. So it is in reading the revelations of heaven. We may take up the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Covenants, and commit them to memory—at least the subject matter therein, and we may suppose that we understand the doctrine of salvation, and conclude from our diligent study that we have become altogether acquainted with the prophecies and revelations; and yet, after all these things, without the gift of revelation directly to ourselves, or the gift of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven to rest upon us as speakers and hearers, we cannot expect to be materially benefited.

We may learn many things from the