

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT—HOW TO CONTINUE TO
BE SONS OF GOD—NECESSITY OF PRAYER

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, DELIVERED IN THE OLD TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, NOVEMBER 17, 1867

Reported by G. D. Watt

We have great reason to be thankful for the blessings we enjoy as individuals and as a people. There is no other people on the earth, that we have any knowledge of, who are blessed to the same extent as this people called Latter-day Saints. If we are blessed more than others, we should be more thankful than others. The blessings and bounties of the Lord upon us are bestowed according to our faithfulness and obedience to the requirements made of us. We have seen times in our history as a people, that if the hand of God had not been immediately over us, we must have perished. But to secure His blessings the Lord requires the strict obedience of His people. This is our duty. We obey the Lord, Him who is called Jehovah, the Great I AM, I am a man of war, Eloheim, etc. We are under many obligations to obey Him. How shall we know that we obey Him? There is but one method by which we can know it, and that is by the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord witnessing unto our spirit that we are His, that we love Him, and that He loves us. It is by the spirit of revelation we know this. We have no witness to ourselves internally, without the spirit of revelation. We have no witness outwardly only by obedience to the ordinances.

About the time I was preparing

myself to embrace the gospel, there were great reformation meetings, and many professed to be converted. Those were very stirring times. The cause of religion was the great topic and theme of conversation, and preachers were full of zeal to bring souls to Christ through repentance and faith in His name. I recollect very distinctly that if I permitted myself to speak in any of their meetings, the spirit forbade me mentioning or referring to the testimony of Jesus, only in a superficial way. A few who believed in the everlasting gospel which had been revealed through Joseph, the prophet, testified in their meetings that they knew by the spirit of revelation that God had done thus and so, and they were hooted at immediately by those reformers. If I spoke at all in their meetings, I had to guard every word I uttered, lest I should offend those who professed to understand the gospel of life and salvation, but who did not. Gradually we broke through this fear, and ventured to utter the sentiments of our hearts, in faith before God, delivering that to the people which the Lord had revealed to us. Such is the condition of the professed religious portions of Christendom today. They refuse to receive the testimony of Jesus through revelation from His spirit; but they believe in the mutterings,