

holy Gospel unless we obey the ordinances thereof, and all the commandments and laws and requirements that are laid down for us to obey? Now I know that every Latter-day Saint will come to the same conclusion that I do—that if we did not obey, we would not be entitled to any of these blessings from our Father. There is not a Latter-day Saint but who comes to the same conclusion as myself—that we would not merit, we would not be entitled to, we could not claim at the hand of our God those blessings that he has promised through obedience to his Word. Could we be called the people of God? We would be in the path of disobedience. We would be in the path that leads to death. We would be in the broad road that millions are walking in to death. Now, every one of us comes to this conclusion.

This people I say are very tardy. I will ask you a question, and I will let you answer it in your own minds, for you know, and I am satisfied that the answer I shall give will satisfy the Saints. Can we stand still, receive so much pertaining to the blessings of the kingdom of God, receive so much knowledge, just so much wisdom, just so much power, and then stop and receive no more? How is this, Latter-day Saints? Your answer will be precisely like mine—I can answer with you all. This people must go forward, or they will go backward. Will all answer this question the same way? Will the same conclusion be in the mind of every Latter-day Saint, that this work is a progressive work, this doctrine that is taught the Latter-day Saints in its nature is exalting, increasing, expanding and extending broader and broader until we can know as we are known, see as we are seen? That is the answer of the Latter-day Saints.

We will say we have received a great deal; very much instruction have we received. But there are keys to open up other ordinances which I will mention. Do you recollect that in about the year 1840–41, Joseph had a revelation concerning the dead? He had been asked the question a good many times; “What is the condition of the dead, those that lived and died without the Gospel?” It was a matter of inquiry with him. He considered this question not only for himself, but for the brethren and the Church. “What is the condition of the dead? What will be their fate? Is there no way today by which they can receive their blessings as there was in the days of the Apostles, and when the Gospel was preached upon the earth in ancient days?” When Joseph received the revelation that we have in our possession concerning the dead, the subject was opened to him, not in full but in part, and he kept on receiving. When he had first received the knowledge by the spirit of revelation how the dead could be officiated for, there are brethren and sisters here, I can see quite a number here who were in Nauvoo, and you recollect that when this doctrine was first revealed, and in hurrying in the administration of baptism for the dead, that sisters were baptized for their male friends, were baptized for their fathers, their grandfathers, their mothers and their grandmothers, etc. I just mention this so that you will come to understanding, that as we knew nothing about this matter at first, the old Saints recollect, there was little by little given, and the subject was made plain, but little was given at once. Consequently, in the first place people were baptized for their friends and no record was kept. Joseph afterwards kept a record, etc. Then women were baptized for men and