Teachings on the law of Tithing

        by Presedent Brigham Young Novr. 5th  1854

I feel some like talking, and giving some explanations on the principle of tithing.

Our Bretheren to day have spoken pretty freely upon principles bearing upon the tithing.

In the first place I wish to tell the people, and I wish them to tell their families and neighbors until it extends to all the inhabitants of this Territory, that I beleive just as much as I beleive that I now stand before you, or that the sun ever shone, unless this people do hearken to the principle of Tithing, that they will find the devourer to increase upon them until the fire burns; I beleive it and have beleived it.  And if I was to come out and tell you in the name of Israels God, if this people do not tythe themselves, and pay better attention to the law of tything that the Lord God Almighty will smite the earth they occupy and smite them.

And some will turn round and say I wish to scare them.  I am utterly opposed to threatening any person with God Almighty, or hell fire.  I always shun that path.  Some of the bretheren get up here; for instance when brother Hyde wants to accomplish anything on this earth, has to threaten them with God Almighty, and hell fire, if they do not do so, and so.  I want to tell you my own private feelings, the man or woman poor miserable creatures that wont serve the Lord for his righteousness will not do it by being threatened with hell ire.  That is my private feelings.If this people do not love the law of God because of its purity I would not give a curse for your religion, and you will get nothing but a curse for it.  That is the reason I never want to threaton.  I wish to lead the people in the right way; in the path of duty without any threats, without holding out any peculiar inducement; but I wish them so to reflect upon the things of <Gof> the kingdom of God and to serve him to that degree that their minds will be open to eternity; that they could look for instance at Bro. Jedediah Grants disscourse with regard to the Lords owning the earth, organising the elements, and demanding of his people such and such duties and performances, that they could look at it as clear as they can look at a sheet of paper, and understand it as well as they can understand how to read of these pages in the bible, that is the way I want the people to live, then it would save my preaching, and calling upon them, and diliver us from a great deal of labor.

Now I tell you again, if I am not misstaken, if & understand the mind and will of the Lord concerning this people, in the mids of these mountians, instead  of your being afflicted, instead of our being afflicted with crickets,and with grasshoppers we will be afflicted with that that is a thousand times worse.  Now I say if I am not misstaken, I beleive this will be the case; I firmly beleive it.  Well if the people feel, if they actualy feel as though they did not want to <to> pay tithing, and this is objectionable to their feelings, to their faith, and sentiments, I tell you what I wish you would do, I wish you would pick up what you have got and leave this Territory. and if I had all the Elders that are preaching in the world before me this afternoon I would say to them what I have always said concerning the law of God; when you go and preach to the people and they beleive hand them out the simple plan and principles of the law of tithing; and not do as you have universally done almost without an exception.  Every Elder that returns home with a company of saints, especialy those that have property, come and say, Bro. Brigham, now these men are good men, and I wish you would understand that I have not taught them the law of tithing; I have talked with them some about it; I have given them a few ideas, and I want you to touch very lightly on tything." It is so disgusting to me I never say anything to them.  If they do not love the Gospel of salvation enough to give themselves and all they have for eternal life; then go to hell says I, for I am in a hurry as Carrington said this morning.  There is bretheren; I will inshure it I pick up men in this City that honestly owe fifty thousand dollars of tithing in Cash. I know of a number I can count up that ows twenty thousand here with five minutes, now due this Church.  They say, "Bro. Brigham do you want this money." Where I to answer the question according to the nature of it, I should say it is none of your buisness; it is not for you to enquire about, who wants it, or what it is going to be done with; but to answer the so as to be satisfied, I say, No not the first piciyune do I want myself, but I want it to gather the poor, and feed the sisters here who have not enough to eat, whose husbands are in the world preaching.  There are those in this congregation who do not have the comforts of life because of the coveteousness of those that have, they and their childeren are living upon a particle of bread, and a few potatoes, and a little salt; they have not a pound of shugar in the house:  have they got a little composition if <for> their childeren are taken sick or a few hot drops?  No.  Have they a little tea if the women are unwell?  No, not a particle nor sixpence to buy any.  Furthermore go from this congregation and from this city, to the old countery esspecialy, and what can you see there?  Scores and hundereds, and thousands of men, women, and childeren belonging to this Church that this very day if you were to see them, are walking through the streets, and you would see them with their bodies bent down this way through faintness and want of nourishment, and the people here withhold their tithing, and the people yonder are starving to death.

Again the eyes of this people universally without exception, all men, and all women in this kingdom, but what their eye is on that spot of ground on this block to have a temple finished that they may go in and receive their washings and anointings and sealings which they can receive no where else:  Though we may now pretend to give endowments, they are  illegal; every temple ordenance that has been administered in this valley is illegal.  I will give you the key to this.  The Lord promiced us before the death of Joseph if we would not tarry in Nauvoo illinoi and finish that temple, and give the saints their endownents, he would give them their endowments, if he led them to the Mountians to do it. He permits is, it is a privilege to oen the eyes of the  people preparetory to giving unto them certain keys, and ordenances, preparatory to the work of endowments in the temple, and in case they should die it will be valid; but if they live every ordenance that has been performed will be done over again when we finish the temple.  You say, "it is labor lost; Just advance that labor and expence we are using to give the bretheren their endowments from year to year, to the temple and we will have it done the quicker".

About every man that refuse, and every widow woman that pays tithing, there is just about so many different cases, and sercumstances that could be called up that cause queiries in the minds of the people.  I will take father                               that sits here before me; he goes round the streets peddling with a basket and tends his garden, so that they make out to live.  He comes to me and says he, "Bro. Brigham is tithing required of me, I can hardly live".  I frequently turn round to Bretheren of this class, and say when I want tithing from you I will call upon you; I would rather call on the rich before I do on the very poor.  Does he actualy owe tithing?  Yes, he does.  If he is capable of making twenty five Cents A day the year round, every tenth day he owes that twenty five cents in the tithing office.  If he can make but one penny a day the year round, and has to begg to get the remainder to feed <his family> himself and wife:  does he then owe tithing?  Yes, every tenth penny he earns.  Says you that is hard, that a man should pay tithing and he is not capable of living.  Bless your soul, if you could but understand the thing, they would see at once by and by, his paying the tenth penny into the store house of the Lord, the Lord would open the windows of heaven unto that individual that he would earn four, then eight, then sixteen, and by and by he would get thirty two; and pretty soon sixty four, and then one hundered and twenty eight: but the people do not see it, and it keeps them poor eternally.  "I wish you could explain that," I have not time.  We should want more crow bars, and hand pikes to pick the eyes of the people open than we use in the quarry.  Be patient and put a little salve on your eyes, and moisten them, and perhapes the people will get their eyes open without picking them open with a steel pointed pick.  But those men owes tithing.  Now we supose this case, that where a men do not get more than a penny a day the year round does he owe any portion of that?  Yes every tenth penny.

Now I take another person.  We have a great deal of argument, and a great deal said about tithing.  I take a man at work in our office, and I will supose we give him one thousand dollars a year for clerking.  He takes a portion of that he receives for his wages, and he buyes a farm, and he hires a man, at ten or twelve, or forteen dollars a mounth, and sends him on his farm.  This hired man goes to work on the farm and plows it up, and sowes it with wheat, and plants his corn.  This clerk perhapes sends him down four cows, and by and by some sheep, and stocks his farm.  Now this clerk we are paying him a thousand dollars a year; he owes tithing on this, this he pays, he occupies his time at clerking.  He turns round, and says he, the one hundered dollars credited me on tithing, and pay me the other nine hundered; with that he has bought his cows, teem waggon sheep etc. down to the ducks and geese.  Now says he I pay my tithing by giving one hundered dollars.  I know you do not know clerks, you do not pay your tithing.  If you receive a thousand dollars for your wages, and you give one hundered of that for tithing, and callculate you pay your tithing; but rubb a little eye salve on your eyes so as to get common sense into you.  Have you got anything more besides your own wages.  Have you not got a farm, and is there no profits on it?  "Yes.  I have raised a thousand bushels of wheat this year." What has it cost?  You let me tell you, in many instances wheat does not cost three bits a bushel to raise it.  Supose it costs this by hiring men; suporting your teem, finding seed etc.  We take that three bits a bushel out of the crop, and put that by a pile by itself; that is the expence of raising this wheate, and other grain in like manner.  Now is there any tithing due?  Yes. there is nine bits a bushel for each bushel of wheate he has got, after taking out one forth part of his crop that has cost him to raise it.  Now then, whatever he has got left whether a hundered, fifty or a thousand bushels of wheate, corn, oats, barley, buckwheat millet etc. when he has paid for the raising of that grain, he owes one tenth of it to the tithing office.  Does he owe any More? Yes.  Has he got a teem of horses?  Yes he has one.  He has paid his tithing of the grain after paying the expence of raising of it, and paying a tenth of his wages, and he thinks his tithing is paid; but it is not paid yet.  You have got a an of horses there, and one tenth day with that teem is due to the tithing office, or the avails of it; every tenth day or <of> the avails, of that teem is due to the Lords store house, every tenth day; and perhapes a yoke of oxen besides.  He has got a teem of horses, and oxen, does he owe any tithing on his oxen? Yes he does one tenth day of the labor of these Cattle, that is all the increas they have.  He owes one tenth of his wages at the tithing office, one tenth of his grain after paying the expences of raising it, and then one tenth of this work, out of three hundered days he owes thirty one days work with that teem, with his horses, and if he has a yoke of oxen, he owes thirty one days work with that yoke of oxen.  His tithing aint paid yet.  I want you to understand it.  He paid his tithing on his wages, on his grain, and now he has got through and paid his tithing on a span of horses or his yoke of oxen but he has not got done paying tithing yet.  What more has he got?  He has four cows on that farm.  These four cows have raised four calves this summer then he owes one tenth of the four whatever they are worth.  You understand he does not pay out tithing on the cows because he bought them with the nine hundered dollars he had left, or on the horses he owned because he bought the horses with the nine hundered dollars. he   He did not owe anything then on his horses, oxen, and cowes, only on their increase, what is their increase?  Their time.  What is the increase of the cows?  their Calves, butter, Milch and cheese, that is the income of the cows.  When he has paid one tenth of these four calves, he is not through paying tithing yet; these cows has produced him two hundered pounds of butter this summer, besides raising Calves; if they have he owes twenty pounds of that butter into the tithing office, and if he dont pay that debt that debt will stand against him, and he will get scorched for it too.  You know I am careless whether people pay their tithing or not that is as far as I am conserned as an individual, but for the sake of the people, and the kingdom of God I am tenacious they should pay their tithing; for their sakes, and the sake of the kingdom, therein I am ancious they should pay their tithing.  Now if they dont pay that twenty pounds of butter into the tithing Office, it is a debt that will stand against them.

Hold on, let us see if we can rake up anything else, you think I have got tithing enough from one man;   I have not done with him yet.  That man has twenty fowels he bought with the nine hundered dollars; they have laid four hundered eggs, and they have hatched out two hundered chickens, he owes twenty of these into the tithing office; if he has used two hundered of the eggs he owes twenty into the tithing office.  Somebody comes along and says, "we have a few ducks and geese over there,"  if you have I will take them for no duck or goose shall be allowed to lay without paying tithing on them, and if they do not lay they cease to be mine; cease to own anything that will not increase and yeild a profitl do not be guilty of owning anything that is not worth paying tithing on; dont say you have anything in heaven, earth, or hell that is not worth paying tithing on.  If he has ducks and geese and he picks them seven or eight times through the sumner, one tenth of those feathers belong in the tithing office, and one tenth of the goslings, and young ducks he has raised belongs in the tithing office.  We look further round to the backside of his house, and he has got piggs, two good fat pigs.  What are these?  "My wife fatted them from the ofall of the house, from the dish water etc." If your Wife economises and she has raised the ducks and pigs etc.  If it were my Wife I owe tithing on her labor, if she has the ability of making the family comfortable she received it from God, and owes the tenth of that ability to her Lord and Master.  You owe one tenth of that Pork you have made from the butter milk. We have made one hundered pounds of cheese, one tenth of that belongs to the tithing office.  We have not got through with that man yet.  In his opperations in the summer he slips in his garden;        <and> that hired man <farm> has raised me two hundered bushels of potatoes on my farm; this

farm; this clerk owes one tenth of these potatoes, he has raised also four hundered heads of cabbage, forty of these Cabbages belong to the tithing office; and you eat them up and sell them, and you robb the Almighty just as much as you are capable of doing.  You cannot get into heaven to steal his gold watch or his Watches; you cannot get there to steal his purse, and shew bread, but you can go into the temples of the Lord and steal the plates, and you can steal that which belongs to the tithing office.  If you hold on and say you wont pay tithing on that, you might as well come into the tithing office and say I put in a hundered bushels of wheate and I will have it back again if I steal it, you would be just as justifiable before the Lord as though you kept it in your barn or seller.  If he raises a hundered bushels of beats, he owes ten bushels of beats there at the store house of the Lord, he is their rightful owner. One tenth of what that farm raises, if he raises carrots, he owes tithing on it.  If he and his family has used two bushels of green peas and eat them up, he owes seven quarts, and he should put down the worth of them, and say we are endebted so much to the tithing office.

Is there anything else, if there is make the same application of every individual thing on your farm.  The rows of new potatoes we have dugg, we will measure, and say I owe tithing on them; and that man or woman that dont callculate to pay that are no saint, and never can be, until they walk up to the law of God, and the day will come that it will burn as an hoven, and those that are coveteous and proud, and lift themselves up against the ordenances of the lord, and undertake to robb  the store house of the Lord. I tell you in the name of the Lord such individuals will be burned, and if they are not consumed and return to their native elements they may think themselves well off if they get nothing more than the Tamarak swamp, and burn up, and scorch their clothes a little they may thank God for their escape.  I have not got through with that Man yet.  This clerk we pay a thousand dollars a year, he is a smart active, shrewd man.  He has a house and garden in the City: and he is up in the Morning, and works until

the bell wrings,  he hows out a third of his garden this Morning; and he goes home at night and hoes u his garden and gathers out the weeds;home at night and hoes up his garden and gathers out the weeds; he thinks I will not pay tithing on this garden as I am up soon and late to raise it.

Hold on, I will speak something else, that man robbs his employer.  That clerk and every workman on the public works they callculate to do a half a days work for themselves, and a half for us, and call it a whole day.     Stop  I always do my swaring in the pulpit; if that man comes up and says I dont want to pay tithing on that, then what the devil have you with my time, I own you, I paid you a thousand dollars a year; he is my servant and slave just as much as those blacks are in the south.  he is my slave and he has not a right to one minute of my time, only by my permission.  I have a right to walk into his garden and take his increase.  He dont only undertake to robb God, but me right before my face and eyes. Dont you supose our workmen robb us any?  Yes to the amount of scores of thousands a year.  I want you to hear it; and you dont do this without my eyes stareing you all the time, and look upon you precisely as you are in your walk and conduct.  If you want to know how I put up with it; I say Lord have mercy upon us, and overlook our weaknesses; we are poor sinners.  I think the sectarian prayr will almost be fitted to the latter day Saints; "O Lord thou knowest we are full of curruption and wickedness, and all manner of curruption thou canst think of." I want you to understand when I employ a man, and set my clerks to work here, and employ men to work for me as an individual or on the public works, I own all your time.  But says one dont you work hours? Yes, but what is the intent of that?  It is to let a man have suitable time to rest, that when he goes to his work, he is able to take hold, and perform his labor without disstroying his constitution.  When he works ten hours a day it leaves him forteen to rest, and you ought to rest all the rest of the time if you work ten hours faithfuly, and read and pray and worship God.  If ten hours is not enough for you to work I will tell you what we will do in a moment; we will shut down the gate, and knock out the clapper out of the old bell, and take it easteren stile, work from light to dark; and if any man turns up his nose at that, go as quick as you please; we ask no odds of you; it is no difference to me whether that temple is built, or whether the work progresses or not; do just as you please.  While I am upon this before I return to that clerks tithing, I will say a few words more.  A good many of the bretheren say, "We cannot do as well in the public works as we can some where else," I tell you, you would have been somewhere else, if it had not been for the public works.  It is the public works, and the tithing office that commenced this Territory and sustained it, and eternally will, or else we shall be removed.  If it had not been for the public works you would have been in St Louis begging for bread; or in Philadelphia where some of you used to live where potatoes are           a pound, and butter fifty cents, and in New York it is one dollar a pound.  If it had not been for the public works, you would not have thought of coming here, and if it had not been for the public works the people would have been in a state of starvation.  Who has sustained these stores that have been here?  The public; how have they got it?  Almost entirely through the tithing office.  Scores, and scores of thousands of dollars goes from these public works yearly.  Drop that public works and you go a begging bread.  You could not get a crop if you planted it.  You might plow, sow and dig the ground as long as you please, but when the harvest comes behold you have nothing to harvest.  Now if you want to know how I know it, I know it by the revelations of Jesus Christ.  I want to take up that Clerk again.  It would take me a good while to take up these different cases here, but I have not got through with this Clerk.  I tell you in the first place all he had done with his years labor belongs to me as I have bought him.  Do you owe tithing on that?  yes you do, on every pea, on every potatoe, on every union, on every Cabbage, on every turnip, on every parsnip, and on every thing else you raise in your garden you owe tithing on; I give you the time, and if you get off by paying tithing think well.  I bought your time, and if you are able to labor sixteen hours out of the twenty four that labor belongs here and nowhere else.  This man takes a hundered dollars of the nine hundered, and he buys a flock of sheep, and puts them out to herd on shares; if he does the sheep he buys, say he buys fifty sheep, he dont owe tithing on the sheep, but he paid the tithing on <of> the <thousand> dollars that bought them, but just as quick as the wool is sheared off these sheep that is increase and he owes a tenth of it.  Just as soon as they have fifty lambs, he owes tithing on that, that is the increase.

By speculating he has made a carriage and a span of ponies without consuming much time.  Has he spent no time?  he has spent a few minites now, and a few minutes then, and made the vallue of two or three hundered dollars.  He owes tithing on that:  he has ability to speculate by changing property, it advances and increases in his hand: that ability God gave him, and he owes tithing to the Lord, if he has made four hundered out of one, he owes a tenth on that into the store house of the Lord.  There was a case the when I think of it I will give you the answer I made.

Go back to this man and his farm, it cost three to twelve, one forth for raising one thousand bushels of wheat.  This man that wrought for this man takes one quarter of the wheate to pay him for his labor; he pays tithing on that himselt, you see we get tithing on the whole, there is not a partical of increase but what is tithed, and one tenth of it paid into the Lords tithing store.  The man that wrought for this Clerk takes one forth for his labor, he pays his tithing and that gives a tenth of the whole.  Some ask shall I pay tithing, on my wheat before it is thrashed or when?  who cannot see?  if I have a thousand bushels of wheat now ready to thrash that has cost me nothing it is only the increase I give a hundered bushels for thrashing it the man that thrashes it pays his tithing.  I will answer the question I answered one of the bretheren the other night.  Says he, "supose I till my garden and it is poor ground, and I do not get back the seed I put in." I said you are a fool for tilling such a peice of ground, and we cannot expect anything from you, if you do not know any more than that. "Supose a man does not make anything; he cannot pay tithing on it."  No. he is not worth tithing himself, and if he puts in himself and all he has got he is not worth anything.  I have come to the subject I wished carrington to preach upon this morning.  He talked about it beautifuly, and so has Bro. Grant.

This is the pith of the thing.  But a bishop will use up and dont know how to instruct his ward how to ay tithing.  Some of them think they know and <or> strive to know, and it amounts to just simply this, had it been carried out this day, the tithing that would have come in to the tithing office would not have paid the clerking to charge cabbage heads.  I can tell you what tithing is if I know what it is.  I want to tell you <nothing> one thing more conserning tithing.  Consecration is the first law that was given before the gathered.  The Lord gave Joseph Smith a revelation which said, My people shall tithe themselves; they shall consecrate their property to the Bishop, and when they receive back again that which is needful for them they shall pay one tenth of their increase from that time henceforth; then came on the surplus property, and then the tithing law was renewed by Joseph:  Though Consecration it is one of the first laws given to the people to live by, and one of the last laws they will be subject to.  If the peoples minds are open to know God, and Jesus Christ, whome he has sent and the dealings of God with his childeren, there is not a man or woman will say ought they have is their own, but they will say here I am, and all I have what shall I do

I close my remarks by telling this people the few that here, if they do not observe the law of tithing, as the Lord lives they will be cursed from year to year until they have to leave the country, until they are burned out out, or eat up with the grasshoppers, and our enemies come upon us and disstroy the labor of our hands, and we shall have to leave.  I am not telling you something you can play with; if you think I am trifling with you; when you go home you fathers and mothers, and your little childeren cry for the razor give him the razor, and the sharp chisel, and that is a perfect example to this people, when they have the law of God given to them, and they trifle with it they will bleed.  After all my heart says the Lord have mercy upon us.  How much experience the people have to have to know Jesus Christ our Elder brother and know his disigns conserning the world, and all his works and disigns.  There is just one thing that is for every man woman and child that professes to be Latter day Saintsto live your religion, and then your eyes will be open and you will see for yourselves.  May God bless us and preserve us in the truth to do his will that we may be saved in his kingdom.