INSTRUCTIONS

By President Brigham Young, On the occasion of a family meeting, held at his residence, Great Salt Lake City, December 25, 1857.

(Reported by J. V. Long.)

Now give me your attention and I will take a text; this will please Sister Fanny, for she is fond of text preaching.

Brother John said, in my blessing, that I should live to see my desire in righteousness; I could name that desire, and Brother John would have done, if he had felt well, but I will state that that desire is to see this earth perfectly cleansed from the power of the devil, and to see righteousness prevail, and to see this Church and kingdom spread and continue to spread and increase in power and influence, and it will naturally increase in numbers as it increases in power and influence.  If I have any other desire it is of a momentary character.

I may have desires  to do this or  to do  that,  but I do not think there is one minute in which I am free from my business engagements, but my desires centre          upon the kingdom of God, and my wishes are to see it prosper.

This kingdom that we are in will prosper, and there is not power enough to hinder it, neither in the earth nor under it, and there is not devils enough in hell, nor those that are going there to stop the wheels of this kingdom and work; they have not got the power.  We profess to be saints, men and women of faith, of virtue and of holy practices, and we follow in our conceptions, with regard to living the life of a christian.  As I have frequently told the people our prepossessed feelings that we have gathered from our friends and associates still linger with us, and are round about us.  I can refer you to circumstances to day that will prove this, and all this pertains to human weakness, and that pertains to the flesh, and according to the world we are dark and weak, and have no power, no light, no knowledge only as we see things, or can touch, taste or handle.  For instance the thing that I refer to now, br. John could not bless people, or could not feel as well to do it sitting down as standing up, because he had not been accustomed to it.  We have been taught that people can pray standing in a perfect attitude.  When we go to kneeling we have been taught that somebody must get up and talk, but when tradition is away from us we will find that whatever position we are in, we are as well prepared to perform any duty as we can be.  This tradition is fast receding, and is being taken from the people.

We are beginning to see that our life is only the beginning of eternal life, and that our life in that eternal state will be occupied in completing that which we have here commenced.  We come together in the capacity of a Ward meeting, we come together for a blessing meeting, and it must be performed this way, every thing according to our prepossessed feelings and traditions.

Well I can say that these matters pertain to the gospel of life, and are open to my mind, and when we first commenced this day, and while br.  John was engaged in his engaged in his exercise, my mind was in vision.  Why talk of blessings, just as quick as Zion is redeemed the whole business of thousands and thousands of Elders will be to do the work and to attend to the ordinances for the dead, and those that are faithful will bless for the dead for a thousand years.  We see that this will have an effect upon us, but then it will our business, we shall have nothing else to do.  It is a peice of hard labor to go into the washing room, then the anointing room, and then go through the ordinances of endowments.  We see people go into the endowment house to labor and they get hungry; we keep men and women on their feet, although we have prepared some seats, and by this we see that we will become weary and tired in performing the ordinances of the House of God.

If I live to see that I desire, perhaps I shall see thousands of Temples where there will be 500 men and women to work to redeem the House of Esau, that is the gentiles who are not of the promised seed.  These things are before me, and when I go to do these duties, I go as to manual labor, whether it is to bless, to ordain, to anoint the sick and bless them, I go just as I go to any other work, and I leave it to sister Eliza who goes to the House of the Lord to work, if she does not consider it pretty hard work.  The do not care how laborious the duties are which they have to perform they do them with pleasure.

We have our Patriarchs, and when the time comes that we go to work for our dead friends we will not care about labor, and the laboring portion of the community will rarse the grain for our consumption.  Men will go into Temples and dwell there year after year, and many will make Temples their homes, and go to work and perform the ordinances without which many would be lost.

This is my mind and these are my feelings upon this subject; and my whole affections are upon these things, and all that I have and possess. I want put into the kingdom of God, and then I want the door locked, and I want to have it so that no man can get it, and I mean to have it so that the understrappers cannot get it out of the kingdom of God.  We have to labor, we look forward to the time when we shall be free.  Well now we are free at the present time, and we are just as free as we can be, according to our present capacity,

This kingdom will gain in power, in knowledge, wisdom and in influence, and it will be but a few years before we can say to the State of Missouri and also to the State of Illinois give up those characters who have injured us that they may be delt with according to the demands of justice, and we can see that the hand of God will be given to the deliverance of the saints.

I recollect what br. Joseph told me when I got my family over the river; he asked me if I thought I was going through Iowa in safety, and I said that I never saw a day that I felt safer, and he replied if I did it would be more of a miracle than it was for Moses to lead the people through the wilderness.  I told him that I did not know but I felt sure we should go through safely, as for the miracle I did not know much about it.

We have come here to the mountains, and the Lord has done this, and he had it in his mind when this Church was built to plant it in these mountains at a certain time.  He knew this and he took his own means and time to bring it about.

Ten years ago last July when we were down upon that Temple Block, and I think by sister Whitney's house I stated that if we were let alone for ten years we would not ask any odds of our enemies, and I think that it was ten years precisely that we were let alone at that time.

Well the United States has been a free Government since they declared their independence 80 years ago.  From the day that the signers of the declaration put their names to the paper till this last summer, there never has an army or troops of men that have met with a perfect bluff, a perfect snagg as has these troops now upon our borders, and never were they made touse up and overdo themselves, and hop up and bite their own noses off till this army that have come to Utah, and all that is necessary is for me to point my finger and tell them to stay there, and they will wilt and dry up, and be known no more.

This Church and kingdom will still increase.  There is not a City, there is not a Government in any of the civilized world, and a good many that are called heathens, the inhabitants of Indostan and China, through the Christian world their eyes are as much upon us as the eyes of Missouri were upon Joseph when we were there, and they are watching the result of certain movements, and when they find that the United States has taken up a crusade like fighting the air against shadows or against the fog, they will watch for them dwindleing into their own shadows, and be lost therein, and the fire will blaze, and the news will go that there a people in the mountains called Mormons, and that they are in the fastnesses of the rocky mountains, and the United States can do nothing with them, and the time will soon be that their name and sound, and the pride of the people will be "I am from Utah," and I am a Latter day saint, and this will strike terror to the christian and to the heathen world, and that time is close at hand.  And let me say while upon this subject that if there is a much performed in ten years to come, as has been in ten years past that time will not pass till our government and the Governments of Europe will take off their

hats, and make a bow.  When that time comes I can then say to a State, to England, to France, to the German States, or any other kingdom on the earth "Let our Elders in there, or we will attend to your case; you bar your gates against our Elders, and I am after you; let them go in peace and preach the gospel to the poor."

Time rolls along faster than we are prepared to receive things, but it will keep rolling, and we must prepare for it.

Sister Fanny this is consoling.  Brother Long is writing this, and you may watch this and see if it does not come to pass as I have spoken.

Well here we are, and the tradition is upon us, and it seems to stick to us, and though we may worship the Lord we do it to serve ourselves.  I do not go to a dance to build up the kingdom of God, but to refresh and invigorate my body, but the kingdom is uppermost in my mind all the time.  I never go to have a social chat but the kingdom of God in the same, and just as dear to me as any where else.  It is just the same when I used to go to chop, to team, with me every engagement is the same as the ordinances of the house of God, my feelings are all the time the same with reference to the kingdom of Gdd.

I took the liberty to instruct Brother John about his manner of giving blessings; he is getting to be an old man, and I gave the advice for his benefit, for it is the order of the kingdom for a Patriarch to sit with his right hand upon the head of the male members and his left upon the female, and when in this position the Spirit of the Lord will roll upon him, therefore I say let his body be in a position where it wont be partaking of death.  A man can wear himself out, and I do not know but br. John thought there was a forbidding spirit here, but I do not allow devils to dwell here, and if there any persons about me who love evil Spirits I walk over them as I do fly turds.

I want br. John to know that I live here and that God lives here, and the power of the priesthood lives here, and that is the "Boss" of my house, and my Father and my king lives and reigns here, and I feel like kicking every body out of doors that will not honor it; and I am just as strong as I was when old Sydney wanted to lead the Church astray, and I feel that I could sling mountains from me when the power of the priesthood rests upon me  Let me know the mind and will of God and I am stronger than a thousand millions of Gentiles.  Phelps called me the "Lion of the Lord," and I feel like a thousand lions.  Only get the Spirit of God upon you, have it like a fire within you; that is the way it is with me, whether I speak or not.  The power of the priesthood is here.

When I first heard of Joseph's death the first flash across my mind was "are the keys of the priesthood here?" I was sat leaning in a chair, with Orson Pratt upon my left, and I had no more idea of it falling upon me than of the most unlikely thing in the world, and I felt it come like a flash of lightening to my mind, and I said, "the keys of the kingdom are here".  I did not think it was with me, but I felt that they were here, but knew that it was the Lord's business.

We have to eat, drink and sleep, and it is just as necessary that Brother John should preserve his health of body until he is 95 or a hundred years old, and he can have nothing more urgent upon him than to preserve his body to do good.  I have not any other business but to do good.  The Lord dispences his blessings upon me, and tells me where to dispence them, and if he bless me with wisdom, knowledge and understanding he does it that I may bless those that need blessing, and to do all the good I can; to preach and pray.

I recollect hearing br. John say that his heart was a fountain of prayer; he has always been so, and so has my mind.  Whether I go to a barn or elsewhere my prayer is to have the mind of the Lord that I might know just what to do, and I consider myself in the line of my duty in one thing as in another.  The whole world is the Lord's, the devil has struck his finger on it, but we mean to cleanse the platter, and then plow and sow, and reap and shear, make cloth, and act as the servants of God.

Well, that is the way I feel, and look at it.  Sister Fanny, I have no

other business but to do right, and I feel first rate, and I know that Jesus reigns here, and that I am his servant, and I am ready, just as I ever was, to kick any body out of doors that wont bow to the priesthood, but I have the weakness of human nature, and I take the wisest course to bring my family, and men's minds to it.  But we shall be afflicted with this weakness of human nature, and this affliction will continue until we shall overcome it.

Well, there is a great many items of doctrine that I can talk about or teach, and if any man can throw out an item of doctrine that is false without my discovering it, just tell me that I am not able to maintain my calling.

Is it for us to administer for our dead?  Suppose I die without administering for my fore-fathers what will become of them?  Why I will get my resurrection, and teach my children and children's children what to do.  I will say I want you to go and be baptized for so and so.

Suppose br. Joseph should come forth after we have built this Temple he cannot be baptized, nor have hands laid on for any body; he has got beyond the ordinances of the flesh, but he can say to John, Joseph, Phinehas or any body else, there is a man in ths spirit world that I want the ordinances attended to for, go into the waters and be baptized for him.  The man goes and does as Joseph tells, gets baptized for him, confirmed, receives the endowments, and when all the ordinances, even to the blessing of a Patriarch are past through, now says Joseph I can resurrect that man, and have him with me.  But I want to have you understand that just as soon as a man goes into the spirit world, he cannot do any earthly ordinances, but he can dictate others, and he can go and preach the gospel to any of his friends.  Now says he to a man go and receive all the ordinances, and I will bless you for this; yes I can receive all the ordinances for my Great, Great, great grandfather, and when all the ordinances are performed for him that has been in the spirit world 500 years, then I go and ask by the Urim and Thummim where to find him.  That is doctrine, the whole truth of the matter Joseph.

I preached that when you and I went to Canada, and I will tell you wherein.  In the case of Paul being called to preach the gospel, Jesus appeared to him, but he could not perform one ordinance for him, but sent Paul to Tarshish, and told him to go and search out one Annanias, and all he could do was to give him his errand to perform, told him to go and Ananias baptized and ordained him.  The dead can dictate but they cannot perform ordinances.  Don't you recollect me preaching that in Canada in the case of Nicodemus?  He could receive the elements, but he must send to Joppa for one Peter, for neither the angels nor the Holy Ghost could prepare him for salvation, he must send for a man that was living.  That was my first preaching.  And Joseph your testimony in Canada made me feel well; it was a sample of preaching, the spirit of it I could carry with me.

Sister Fanny, am I not talking to you?  Fanny replied, yes. this is my feeling; this day is worth a thousand to me.  Let persons be shut up for days and weeks as I am, and they will feel the want of preaching.  I read, but I want to hear the scriptures expounded.