

"HEAR YE HIM"

A Devotional Series For Radio

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The Sermon: THE REDEMPTION OF THE SOUL

Scripture: Doctrine and Covenants 85:4 a,b, and 90: 5e.

Now, verily I say unto you, that through the redemption which is made for you, is brought to pass the resurrection from the dead. And the spirit and the body is the soul of man. And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul; and the redemption of the soul is through him who quickeneth all things. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receiveth a fullness of joy, and when separated, man cannot receive a fullness of joy.

I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore.

All life, all power, all energy needs implementation. If you have ever worn a nylon garment, or slid across the nylon seat covers of your car, or watched the lightning in a thunder storm, you know that there is static electricity in the air continually. But this electricity turns no wheels, conveys no messages, does no work. It needs first to be guided and controlled in proper channels, and then implemented by means of a motor, a light bulb, a radio or T.V. set, an electric toaster, or what-not -- something to transform its energy into useful work for man.

It is equally obvious that an electric motor, a light bulb, a radio or T.V. set, or a toaster by itself can do nothing. It must be connected to the power line. But when the controlled and channeled power is connected with the appliance, the appliance becomes in a sense alive and useful, and the power becomes implemented.

A spirit without its body lacks implementation. It has no way of expressing its will or doing the work it wants to do. On the other hand, a body without its life-giving spirit is dead. The power is off, and the body is helpless.

Man is a duality. He consists of spirit and body. The spirit was created first. It is this spiritual creation which is depicted in the first chapter of Genesis, where it is told that God created man in his own image -- a spiritual being. Though in the spirit form man lacked implementation, he was a conscious, living personality, according to the Bible account; for God gave instructions

that men should be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, even before he had a body with which to carry out this instruction.

God was not taken by surprise when he looked upon the earth he had created and found, according to Genesis 2:5, that "there was not a man to till the ground," in spite of the creation in chapter one. Then the scripture records that God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. The body was formed to implement the life and intelligence of the spirit, and in the final act of creation the two were brought together. Note carefully the result: "Man became a living soul." He became a complete personality, with bodily implementation for the life and power of the spirit, and with life for the dead, inert matter of the body. Man became a living soul.

Although the words "soul" and "spirit" are often used interchangeably, there is a difference according to Latter Day Saint theology. "The body and the spirit is the soul of man." It was not until body and spirit were joined together by God's act of creation that man became a living soul.

The body and the spirit of man should have remained together. They were created to be together; but sin intervened. Adam had been warned: "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." He did sin; he did die. That death was two fold, but in each case it was a separation of things created to be eternally together. First, it was a separation of man from the presence of God. That

was spiritual death. Second, it eventually resulted in the death of the body, or a separation of spirit and body.

It was to overcome these two effects -- these two varieties of death -- that Jesus came into the world. His atonement was designed to bring man back into the presence of God where he belongs, and to bring him back as a complete soul, with body and spirit inseparably connected, as they were intended to be in the beginning.

Jesus came into the world as both God and man. He partook of the nature of Deity, but that Deity was clothed in human flesh, born of a woman, and fashioned in the likeness of all other men in the flesh. Because of his humanity he suffered every temptation known to other men in the flesh. Because of his Deity, he lived always without sin; therefore he owed no debt to sin. His spirit never lost control of his body; he was never forced to yield to death as you and I shall some day be forced. The wages of sin is death; but he had done no sin. Jesus voluntarily and willingly laid down his life. "No man taketh it from me," he said, "but I lay it down of myself." He suffered his body to be nailed to a cross that he might bear the penalty of sin for all men. Then, because of his Deity, his omnipotent power, he took up his body again, and rose on the third day. He restored the implementation of the body to the spirit, and the life of the spirit to the body.

That restoration or resurrection of Jesus' body completed his atonement, and made it possible for every man to be similarly restored -- body to spirit, and spirit to body. The resurrection of the dead is the redemption of the soul. Christ's atonement made it possible for every man, redeemed from death, a complete personality, a living soul, to be restored to the presence of God for judgment. Christ's redemption comes upon every man of the race of Adam. It is universal. But let us note in passing that not all of those men who have been redeemed from the consequences of the sin of Adam will find themselves worthy to remain in God's presence. Some will depart into outer darkness -- body and spirit still inseparably connected, but unworthy and unable to abide the light, the glory, and the perfection of God be-

cause of a rebellious life of sin. Such can only suffer an eternity of remorse and regret and self-condemnation.

As Jesus brought God to man, so he also brought man back to God. The glorified body which came forth from the tomb on the first Easter morning was the same body which died on the cross, a physical body, a human body, born of woman. It was that same body which later ascended into the heavens to sit at the right hand of God. It is in the hope of his atoning death and resurrection that we can say with Job, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." By the power of his resurrection all men may be restored -- spirit to body, and a redeemed soul (consisting of both spirit and body) to the presence of God. The body and the spirit is the soul of man, and the resurrection of the body is the redemption of the soul -- the reuniting of two separated parts of what God intended from the beginning to be an inseparable, unified whole.

The elements are eternal. They were intended to furnish implementation to spirit. Spirit and element, inseparably connected as they will be in the resurrection, will receive a fullness of joy. The spirit will have perfect control of the body; the body will furnish perfect implementation for the spirit. There will be, can be, no more separation -- no more death -- no more ills, sickness, pain, or suffering -- no more physical handicaps or limitations. There will be all eternity in which to carry out the wishes of the spirit -- to implement them through the body. Death, once a penalty for sin, by God's mercy and Christ's atonement has become a means of redemption -- a means of discarding the imperfect body and receiving a perfect body, in which spirit and element, inseparably connected, can receive a fullness of joy.

This concept is unique to Christianity. We do not believe in a ceaseless wandering through ascending forms of life by means of reincarnation, nor in a complete loss of personality in the nothingness of forgetfulness of Nirvana, but in a fullness of joy -- a full awareness -- a fullness of expression, through him whose rising from the grave we commemorate again at this season. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."