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## Are Brigham Young's Sermons scripture?

*by John Walsh*

**Brigham Young said, "I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call scripture." (Journal of Discourses 13:95). Are all of Brigham Young's sermons considered scripture and official LDS doctrine?**

No, neither the Church nor Brigham Young himself considered all of his sermons scripture. To understand the context of the quote that you are using, let's look at the entire paragraph of your reference.

"Well, brethren and sisters, try and be Saints. I will try; I have tried many years to live according to the law which the Lord reveals unto me. I know just as well what to teach this people and just what to say to them and what to do in order to bring them into the celestial kingdom, as I know the road to my office. It is just as plain and easy. The Lord is in our midst. He teaches the people continually. I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call Scripture. **Let me have the privilege of correcting a sermon**, and it is as good Scripture as they deserve. The people have the oracles of God continually. In the days of Joseph, revelation was given and written, and the people were driven from city to city and place to place, until we were led into these mountains. **Let this [discourse] go to the people with "Thus saith the Lord,"** and if they do not obey it, you will see the chastening hand of the Lord upon them. But if they are plead with, and led along like children, we may come to understand the will of the Lord and He may preserve us as we desire." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 13, Page 95)

"Brother Orson Hyde referred to a few who complained about not getting revelations. I will make a statement here that has been brought against me as a crime, perhaps, or as a fault in my life. Not here, I do not allude to anything of the kind in this place, but in the councils of the nations--that Brigham Young has said 'when he sends forth his discourses to the world they may call them Scripture.' I say now, **when they are copied and approved by me they are as good Scripture** as is couched in this Bible, and if you want to read revelation read the sayings of him who knows the mind of God, without any special command to one man to go here, and to another to go yonder, or to do this or that, or to go and settle here or there." (Journal of Discourses, Vol.13, p.264)

President Young had two prerequisites for calling a sermon scripture. First, he needed to review the sermon and make any necessary corrections. Second, it had to be identified as scripture.

It should be noted that very few of the recorded sermons of Brigham Young were reviewed for correctness by the him. Even fewer sermons were announced as scripture. For the most part, President Young's sermons were given on an impromptu basis and hand recorded by third parties when he spoke. Since only Jesus Christ was perfect and infallible, it is not surprising that some of his sermons are erroneously transcribed. The fact that President Young required a statement to be reviewed and corrected before it is called scripture presupposes errors in some of the impromptu remarks that were recorded by third parties.

Occasionally, the critics make the argument that Brigham Young had plenty of opportunity to correct the Journal of Discourses for any errors. Therefore, they make the argument that it must be considered scripture by default. However, as noted above, President Young taught that for a statement to be considered scripture it must be positively identified as such. He did not say "assume it's scripture unless I say otherwise."

(See [Response to Criticism](#) home page; [Accusatory Questions](#) home page)

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