

of revelation, and that it has been guided and controlled by the spirit of revelation from its inception to the present time. God designed to guide this Church by the voice of revelation. When I see any lack of confidence on the part of our people in the wisdom of the Prophet of God and his associates, I am impressed with the fact that we are lacking in that faith which belongs to the work of God. When the Prophet Joseph Smith was instrumental in establishing this work, he made certain promises, such as have been alluded to by my brethren today. These promises have been fulfilled to the very letter. They not only extended to the remarkable manifestation of the gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost, but they extended to a promise that every man and every woman in the Church should have a substantial testimony concerning the propriety of every movement made by the Prophet of God, in advancing the interests of the work of God upon the earth. And it can be pointed out on the pages of history that neither the Prophet Joseph Smith nor any of his successors ever gave counsel unto the Saints of God that was not attended with blessings and prosperity to those who heeded and acted upon it. Moreover, it cannot be found upon the pages of history where any man has risen up in opposition to that counsel and has stretched forth his hand to steady the ark of God, but what that man has come to disappointment and his folly has been made manifest in the midst of the people of God. I can bear my testimony that these evidences, which have been recorded as a result of the experience of this Church, will continue down to the latest period of time. God has established this work; He has maintained it; He has prospered it in the earth, and He will continue to do so from this time henceforth and forever. God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER A. O. WOODRUFF.

Room for Improvement among the Priesthood—The great distinction between the true Church and other religious bodies—A difference in spirit—Every part of the body necessary to its healthful existence—Warning against a hideous evil.

My brothers and sisters, I trust that I may have your support and the bless-

ings of God to guide me in my utterances here this afternoon. I have no other desire in standing before you than to give you that which the Lord may reveal unto me, and I desire to so live that whenever I am called upon to occupy a position of this kind, the Lord may be pleased to favor me with His Holy Spirit, that I may not be left to depend upon the wisdom of man.

I have a desire this afternoon to say some words that may be stimulating and encouraging to those who hold the Priesthood, especially to those who are acting in the Lesser Priesthood. President Snow has gone among the people and discharged the duties which our Heavenly Father has given him to perform, and after doing so, he unloads a great degree of this responsibility upon the shoulders of the Priesthood in all its organizations. I know there is not that activity among many quorums of the Priesthood that there ought to be; and while it is true the Latter-day Saints during the past year have done exceedingly well in the payment of their tithes, they have not done as well as they would have done had the Teachers, and Priests and the Elders in Israel performed their duties as faithfully as President Snow has discharge his. True, most men who hold these positions are younger men than President Snow, but I regret to have to acknowledge that they have not been as diligent throughout the different Stakes and wards of Zion in regard to this message, which the Prophet of the Lord has given to the people, as they should have been. While visiting a Stake a short time ago, I learned by questioning the High Council, that some of them had not been visited by their Teachers for years; and while that Stake had increased about fifty per cent in the payment of their tithes during the past year, I thought to myself, what a showing they might have made, if the Priesthood in all its departments had been active and faithful.

In order that I might bring before you what I desire. I will read a portion of the 12th chapter of First Corinthians.

“For by one spirit we are all baptized

unto one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one spirit;

"For the body is not one member but many.

"If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body

"And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

"But now hath the Lord set thee members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him.

"And if they were all one member, where were the body?

"And now are they many members, yet but one body,

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

"Nay, much more, those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary;

"And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

"For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked.

"That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

"Now we are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

"And God hath set some in the Church; first, Apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

"Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

"Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

"But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

The Church of Christ was referred to here yesterday and compared to a man seventy years of age, The Apostle Paul also in his beautiful figure compared the Church of Christ to the body of a man. I wish to say a few words regarding this figure which has been used, I have asked myself, what is the greatest cause for the difference between the Church of Christ and the churches that have been es-

tablished by man, for there are many forms of religion, some patterning closely after the one founded by our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And I have thought, is it not because these different bodies have not the Spirit? I compared this spirit to the Priesthood of the Son of God, and concluded in my own mind that this was the greatest cause of the difference which exists between the Church which Christ has established and the churches which have been established by man. When the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord regarding the divinity of the different denominations that then existed upon the earth, and many of which exist today, he was told that they had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof; that they drew near unto the Lord with their lips, but their hearts were far from Him. I thought to myself what a comparison there was between the true Church of God, with the Priesthood and Spirit to enliven it, and the dead forms of religion, as they have been instituted by men. We might carry this comparison a little farther, and take the skeleton of this body, the organization of the Church of Christ, animated by the Spirit and Priesthood of God, and in connection with this skeleton we have the sinews, the helps in government, the muscles, the nerve system and the circulation of the blood from the heart into all parts of the body. And just as it is impossible for a human body to exist without the spirit, so is it impossible for the Church of Christ to exist without the Priesthood of the Son of God. Just as it is impossible for a body to be complete without the brain, the heart and the other organs of the system, so would it be impossible for the Church of Christ to exist in perfection without the Presidency, the Apostles, the Seventies, the High Priests, the Elders, the Priests, Teachers and Deacons. All of them have their special work to perform, just as the organs of the human system have their particular part to do. I compared the circulation of the blood in the body to the active Priesthood, which goes about the whole body of the Church, imparting life and vigor and setting in order all of the parts that may be out of place. Whenever

a member becomes injured, the blood assists in building it up. So with the workings of the Priesthood of the Son of God, in the great body which Christ has established.

I believe that every organization of the Priesthood is just as important and vital to the Church of Christ as every organ is to the human system; and in Stakes or wards where the Deacons, the Teachers, the Priests and the Elders have nothing to do, there will be a stagnation of blood. Our people have suffered the malady in neglecting to pay their tithes, but now this Priesthood is getting to work, this blood is circulating more freely, and directing its attention especially in the direction of curing the body of this particular malady. The Priesthood has labored energetically, but not as much so as we should have done. There are many Teachers and Priests that have not labored as faithfully as they should have done. Think of what a beautiful body this would be if every quorum was active; if the blood circulated through every part of the system and if every part was renovated and cleansed, so that it might be in a perfect state of health. God help us that we may be able to get this body, the Church of Christ, into this desirable condition; that the list containing thousands of names of persons who ought to be tithe-payers and are not, may be wiped out. I believe that one of the most practical ways of bringing about this condition is for the Presidents of Stakes, Bishops of wards and the Presidents of quorums to see to it that they discharge their part of this responsibility. It is not expected that President Snow will be able to reach all parts of the body and be able personally to regulate and renovate the body of Christ, but there are members of the body that have been chosen to do this work, and if they do not do it, that condition which we desire will not exist.

I hope, my brethren and sisters, that President Snow shall live to see the desires of his heart granted unto him. I pray for this and labor for it among the brethren in the Stakes where I go, so that confidence in the Church of Christ in regard to financial affairs may

be maintained. The Church is now upon a good financial basis; but we ought not to cease our labors as soon as we hear good news. We ought not to run well for awhile, and then tire out just when our assistance is most needed. It has taken considerable labor on the part of the Priesthood to stir the people up to a realization of their condition and their negligence in regard to the payment of tithing, and it will take a continual labor on our part to keep the people awakened to these things. Strange that we always have to be labored with in order to get us to do right; nevertheless we have to be labored with and we have to labor with each other that we may keep alive in the Church of Christ. If we are not brought in contact with this Priesthood and its workings we soon die out, just like a member of the human body would die out if the blood did not circulate to that part. Thus it is very necessary that the brethren who hold the Priesthood and the sisters who are engaged in the different organizations of this Church should carry their responsibility and feel that there is an individual responsibility connected with this work which rests upon them, and that God will not justify them if they do not discharge their duties in their separate callings.

I wish to read, for the benefit of those who hold the Priesthood, from the third chapter of Ezekiel, beginning at the 17th verse:

"Son of Man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul.

"Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

This, my brethren and sisters, may be applied to those of us who have received the Priesthood of the Son of God. We have not received it through man. The leaders of this dispensation received it from Peter, James and John and John the Baptist, the men who held the keys of this Priesthood and who received it from the Son of God Himself. Therefore, the responsibility that we are under has not been placed upon us by man; it has come to us from God; and when the head shall say to us, Do this, or that, we are under obligations to do it. We are under obligations to see that there is no stagnation in our part of the body; that there is no negligence in the payment of tithes or in the keeping of any of the commandments in our Stake or ward or association. It is my duty at the head of any association, ward or Stake to see that the people are doing their duty. If they are entirely negligent to the teachings of God that come to us through His mouthpiece, I want to tell you, my brethren and sisters, that those who stand at the head of these organizations will come under condemnation. The Presidency, the Twelve, or the Seventy cannot be in all the wards; but there are men placed there with equal responsibility in their callings, and they have to discharge these duties or the Lord will not hold them guiltless. He will not excuse them if they do not labor diligently and delve into the dark corners and see that there are no cobwebs in their Stake or ward, but that everything is working as it should do; that there is no clog in the machinery of this great body of Christ, but that each is doing his part. If we will do this we will gain salvation and we will enter into the presence of God and hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." If we do not, we cannot expect, because the Priesthood has been conferred upon us, that we will inherit the celestial kingdom of our God. The Lord will not reward the drone, nor the slothful; He will not reward the unjust steward, the one who has not taken advantage of the opportunities God has placed within his grasp. If our talents are great, we have that

much more need to use them than those who are not so greatly blessed.

Before taking my seat there is another matter that occurs to me which I wish to speak upon. I have noticed that there is a spirit creeping in among a certain class of the Latter-day Saints which is not of God, but of the world. It has been popular, ever since Mormonism was established, to have large families; for we understand that there are hundreds of thousands of spirits in the other world anxious to be tabernacled by good fathers and mothers, that they may pass through this state of probation. But there is a certain class of Latter-day Saints that has come to think as the Gentile world does—that it is not stylish, not nice to have large families; and therefore we find, much to our sorrow, that in some instances steps are taken to prevent these spirits being tabernacled by them. I want to say that every Latter-day Saint ought to feel that they, are not justified before God their Father in pursuing a course of this kind. We want, so far as God will favor us, the privilege and blessing of posterity. And those who employ means to prevent this will find in the spirit world that they have lost the stars in their crown and have shut out a means of exaltation; that they have done a grievous wrong which they may not be able to repair for many ages, if at all. Those who fought the system of plural marriage in years gone by were people who were, as a rule, opposed to the large families of the Latter-day Saints, and took steps themselves to prevent spirits coming to them to be tabernacled, in some cases going so far as to be guilty of murdering the unborn innocents. Upon such the curse of God will rest. I greatly desire that this practice shall not creep in among the Latter-day Saints. I have prayed that the Spirit of this subject might be given to some of the older members of this quorum, or to the Presidency, that they might dwell upon it, because I know, from what I have heard from reliable sources, that this spirit which I have spoken of is in a slight degree at any rate creeping in among the Latter-day Saints. Thank God for posterity. Thank God for the large families of the

Latter-day Saints. I wish that we had millions more of them today, and that the world were full of this class of people, who fear God and who desire to serve Him and keep His commandments, and whose sons and daughters are reared in the principles of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my heavenly Father for the testimony which He has given me that this is His work, that President Snow is a Prophet of the true and living God, that God is with him, that He has inspired him, and that the changes which are being brought about in our financial conditions are due to the revelations of God through His Prophet. May God help us to be faithful, to be loyal. May He give us His Spirit, that we may not get into the dark, that we may not lose the Spirit of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. Let us stand up to the rack and do our part. Let us see to it that the responsibility which is placed upon us is discharged, that we may enter into the presence of God our Father, and share the reward of the laborer and those who have been valiant for the testimony of Jesus, and receive eternal life. I ask it through Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

Preservation and Multiplication of life—Dangers of sign seeking—Man established in the truth by faithfulness and the spirit of God.

It will give me great pleasure to receive the spirit to bear testimony to that which we have heard today and yesterday. I think the true spirit of counsel and instruction has rested upon the Apostles who have spoken to us during this conference so far, and I desire to say that I endorse with all my heart the excellent counsel and blessed instruction which they have given to this people. I sincerely hope we will remember these counsels, and remembering them, carry them out in our lives. It matters not how many good things we may hear, nor how much we may know, if we do not apply the instructions we receive and the knowledge we possess to the accomplishment of the work that we have in hand. The paramount duty is to labor for Zion, and work for our own salvation, that we may gain the victory over ourselves and over the powers of evil that are in the

world. The Gospel has been preached to us, and we have essayed to obey it, that we might become the sons and daughters of God—heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son. We can never attain to the blessings of the Gospel by merely becoming acquainted with it and then sitting down and doing nothing ourselves to stem the current of evil that is preying upon us and upon the world.

The remarks that have just been made by Brother Woodruff are worthy of attention and acceptance on the part of the young men and young women of Zion. Those who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of wedded life should see to it that they do not abuse the course of nature; that they do not destroy the principle of life within them, nor violate any of the commandments of God. The command which he gave in the beginning to multiply and replenish the earth is still in force upon the children of men. Possibly no greater sin could be committed by the people who have embraced this Gospel than to prevent or to destroy life in the manner indicated. We are born into the world that we may have life, and we live that we may have a fulness of joy, and if we will obtain a fulness of joy, we must obey the law of our creation and the law by which we may obtain the consummation of our righteous hopes and desires—life eternal.

If the time will permit, I desire to endorse the sentiments that were expressed by Brother Grant. It is a wicked and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign. Show me Latter-day Saints who have to feed upon miracles, signs and visions in order to keep them steadfast in the Church, and I will show you members of the Church who are not in good standing before God, and who are walking in slippery paths. It is not by marvelous manifestations unto us that we shall be established in the truth, but it is by humility and faithful obedience to the commandments and laws of God. When I as a boy first started out in the ministry I would frequently go out and ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing, in order that I might receive a testimony. But the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the