

classes have not been maintained, except in a few places. Now that the school year has commenced we hope that the superintendents and teachers of religion classes will see to it that the classes are again started and that renewed interest is taken in this good work. We have just issued a new edition of outlines, explaining the religion class movement and the procedure, and any of our superintendents or teachers can obtain this by writing to Superintendent Maeser. We hope that this work will not lag, but that we will all see the necessity of giving our children that kind of education that they cannot obtain in our district schools, and that we cannot give at home because we have not the time. This religion class movement has been established in order that our children may be trained religiously as well as mentally and physically, and I trust that we will not neglect it. May God bless you, brethren and sisters; may our conference be a feast indeed unto all present, in my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

"My Shepherd is the Lord my God" was sung by Sister Luella Ferrin.

ELDER M. W. MERRILL.

Proper care of Children—The duties of Teachers—Consequences of neglecting the people—The duty of paying tithing—Promise of a man like unto Moses.

I have heard it remarked that it paid a good many people to come to conference to hear the singing alone. But a great many things are treated upon in the general conference which supply many wants and answer many inquiries among the Saints. We are here for mutual improvement and for instructions which will apply to us when we get home. There is no doubt in my mind that if the Latter-day Saints throughout the Church were fully up to their duties we would have conditions superior to what they are now. There is a laxity on the part of many of the Latter-day Saints. I believe, however, the Saints are improving. Still there is room for more improvement in the affairs of our lives. We have an organization in this Church which the Lord has given us. It was not instituted by man, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This organization has

been multiplied somewhat in the last few years, and no doubt will be multiplied more in the future as we advance and become better acquainted with the Gospel. There are a great many of our young people born and reared in these mountains who need our care and attention as well as that of their parents.

I have thought sometimes that many fathers and mothers do not give that attention to their children which they ought to have. They turn them over to the organizations of the Church; in the first place, to the Primary, and then to other associations as they grow older; and they neglect them at home. I have heard young men say that their fathers never asked them to pray in the family, and I have heard girls say the same. This shows a lack of attention on the part of parents. I am quite confident that many of the organizations in the Church are neglected. Take for instance, the Teacher's quorum. Every ward in the Church is supposed to have efficient men to labor as Teachers among the people. I believe that this important organization in the ward is in many instances, materially neglected. If the duties of Teachers were carried out as the Lord designed they should be, we would see a marked improvement in the midst of the people. These Teachers are not confined to spiritual things. They can talk and advise about temporal things also. In many instances, however, Teachers' visits are hurried over while in others they are put off. If the Teacher is expected to visit once a month, he puts it off till the last day before the Bishop requires him to report, and then he hurries around and does not take the time that ought to be taken. I know whereof I speak in regard to this matter, because in the early days I was trained under Brother Jedediah M. Grant. When the Teachers in the district where he labored all did their duty, it was called a reformation. We had quite a reformation in all the Church at that time. I remember very distinctly in the ward where I lived, Brother Grant on one occasion called all the Teachers to the stand. We met in the bowery, and had a board about sixteen feet long, put on some posts for the stand. There were twelve

of us in the ward, and we had to stand up there in a row. He wanted us all to pray, each one in his turn, commencing on the right and going to the left. Someone asked Brother Grant afterward why he did that, and he replied that he wanted to see whether those young men had the spirit of prayer, so that he could judge if they prayed in the households of the Saints. I was quite a boy at the time, and when it came to my turn I hesitated a moment or so. Brother Grant happened to be kneeling right behind me, and he turned around, grabbed me by the leg with his hand and said, "Now, you pray." Well, it nearly scared all the pray out of me. But it was an object lesson and one that was very profitable to me. How many of the Teachers who go into your homes, gather the family together and pray with the family or ask some of the family to pray? I question whether this is very strictly attended to. Now, it is the Teacher's duty to talk about all matters of interest to the Saints, connected with the kingdom of God. It is their business to inquire of the family if they pay their tithes and offerings, that the poor may be sustained and the hands of the Bishop upheld. In going into the congregations of the Saints it is very seldom that I hear an Elder pray for the Bishop, or for his counselors, or for the Teachers. Teachers need not discuss the condition of the weather, for this is not part of their duty. They should go into the houses of the Saints enjoying the Spirit of the Lord, that they may have a refreshing from the Lord with that family. They go there to bless the family and to do them good, and in order to do this successfully they must concentrate their minds on the object of their labor in the midst of the people. By these means the Saints are instructed in their homes. When we find invalids in the households of the Saints who are unable to attend the gatherings of the people we can comfort and bless them. If this were carried out as the Lord has designed it, the people would become more and more united, and they would be determined to do their duty in paying their tithes and offerings and in attending their meetings. If the teachers did

their duty in every ward, people would feel that they ought to go to meeting. I have heard people say, "We have not seen a Teacher in our house for a year," or for six months, as the case may be. This is not as the Lord designed it and there is some responsibility resting upon the presidents of Stakes and their counselors in regard to this matter. The Lord gave a revelation to President Taylor in his time on this subject. It does not matter how isolated the Saints may live, they are in somebody's ward, and they should be sought after if it takes two or three days to find them. I can remember when Brother Preston was president of the Cache Stake and I was one of his counselors, it took us just one month to get around the Stake and visit the Saints, and then we could not get to all the wards. The Stake at that time ran from Logan to the Montana line. Stakes now are smaller, and they are within the reach of every President. The wards are within the reach of every Bishop, and the teachers can find the people, if they are so inclined. Bishops and Presidents of Stakes should be aroused to the importance of this matter, because when the people are neglected, the Church is neglected, the poor are neglected, the tithes and offerings are neglected. Hence we cannot afford, as officers in the Church, to neglect our duty. If we do the Lord will hold us to account for it.

I believe that a president of a Stake should have a meeting with his counselors at least every week. They should sit down together, sing and pray together, and see what the Lord will suggest to be done in that Stake of Zion. I think Apostle Lyman has advocated this idea. I do not know how far it is attended to, but I say to you, my brethren, it ought to be attended to in every Stake of Zion. Then, following in the same line, every Bishop in the Church should meet with his counselors and talk over matters pertaining to the ward. Just as sure as you do this, you will always find something to talk about that will be of interest and benefit to the ward. If we do not come up to the expectations of the Presidency of the Church, it is because we fail to some extent. We may not fail as individuals, but we

fail collectively. If we all did our duty the Church would be improved and the tithes and offerings would be increased. I understand they have increased; but they have not increased enough yet, because the Saints throughout the Church do not all pay their tithing. We call upon all, whether in the Church or not, to pay their tithing. Some who are not in the Church will do it if you call upon them and ask them. Represent to them that they are living upon the land of Zion and that this is the principle upon which the land is to be sanctified and to bring forth of its strength, and you would find that people who are not in the Church would pay their tithing, and it would be the means of bringing them into the Church, because the Spirit of the Lord would work upon them and He would manifest Himself to them by dream and by vision, until they would see the propriety of joining the Church.

These are questions that have my attention from time to time, and I think they are of importance to the Church. You will read it in the Doctrine and Covenants that the Lord at some time or other was going to raise up a man like unto Moses, to lead the people out of bondage. Well, that man may be President Snow, for aught I know. The Lord seems to be working upon his mind to try and lead His people out of bondage. President Snow is working at it all the time. He wants to get the Church and the people out of bondage. Therefore, I say, the man like unto Moses may be President Snow, for aught I know. I do not know who it is. If it is not President Snow, it will be some man a great deal like him, whom the Lord will raise up in a natural way.

I was much delighted with the remarks of Brother Clawson and Brother Lund in regard to Temple work. I can bear testimony that they are true. The Lord manifests Himself unto His Saints in the Temples. These manifestations are private. They are not talked abroad, but many of the Latter-day Saints who have entered into these sacred places have had manifestations from God in approval of the work they were doing for their kindred dead. Let us not neglect this important thing, in

connection with the other duties that pertain to our calling.

I pray that the Lord may bless the Saints and fill all our hearts with love toward one another; that we may put away our bickerings and our fault-finding, and turn unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, that He may endow us richly with His Spirit; that our mission on the earth may be filled up in usefulness, so that when we get through it may be said of us, Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. God bless you. Amen.

ELDER JOHN W. TAYLOR.

Blinding, sealing and blessing power of the Priesthood—Patriarchal office not always appreciated—Every authoritative change of officers should be cheerfully accepted—Example of Hyrum Smith.

My dear brethren and sisters: I humbly pray that our Father who is in Heaven will bless me with a portion of His Holy Spirit this afternoon, that what I shall say may be in accordance with His mind and will. I feel to bear testimony to the truth of all that I have heard during this conference. I have felt so much like we always feel, I suppose, at our conferences—that this is one of the best conferences that I have ever attended.

There is a question that I would like to speak to you upon a little. It seems to be very much in line with the remarks of several of the previous speakers. To commence with, I desire to make a quotation that was made by Elder Clawson yesterday. It is the words of our Lord and Savior to Peter, (Matt. 16, 13-19.) the presiding Apostle, after Peter had received the revelation from God that Jesus was the Christ Jesus said:

"Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

"And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

"He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am?"

"And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.