

the children, where they visit. While it has been said here that there is a sentiment among the people, to some extent, which does not respect the Priesthood, referring to the authorities of the wards and stakes, and of the Church, I want to say that we do not respect the Lesser Priesthood as much as we ought to do. We ought to respect every Deacon in the Church, and encourage every Deacon to perform his duty. We ought to respect every teacher, and make him welcome, and sustain him in his administrations in our homes. I know that those who understand the Priesthood best, and who have the greatest respect for it, are the men that will call their families together when the Teachers pay them a visit, and will sit down and listen to what the Teachers have to say. When I was a boy, in the Fourteenth ward, with Brother John W. Taylor and other young men, I used to visit President John Taylor as a Teacher. I used to visit President Wilford Woodruff in the same capacity. I will admit that I was glad when they were away from home, because I was so frightened; but when I got through and left the house I was glad they were at home, and that they had been there to receive me as a Teacher in his Church of Christ. They treated us with more respect, they made us feel more at home, and they encouraged us more in the discharge of our duty than any families that we had to visit upon the block. This was because they had the spirit of the Gospel and understood the responsibility of the Holy Priesthood. I remember that many beautiful lessons I enjoyed on the principle of faith came from the sweet instructions of President John Taylor when we visited him as a Teacher; for when we would get through with our duties, he would say, "Now, boys, you have been teaching me, I would like to teach you a little;" and he would tell us anecdotes to increase faith in our minds; tell us how he had asked God to open up his way while declaring the Gospel abroad, to give him a little money, just what he needed to pay for pamphlets or something of that kind, and the Lord answered his prayers in a most remarkable manner. He told us many incidents of this

character, and they tended to create and encourage the principle of faith in our hearts.

My brethren and sisters, may God enable us to remember the glorious instructions which we have received; remember what President Smith has said, that we are in a better condition, as a whole, than ever before. Let us all see to it that he shall not be disappointed in this sentiment of encouragement concerning this people. Let us remember the instructions of Brother McMurrin and the Seventies in regard to our duties and obligations in the selection of missionaries to send the Gospel abroad to the ends of the earth. Let us remember the admonition concerning our tithing, and our moral deportment, and every obligation that the Gospel of Jesus Christ enjoins upon us. If we do this, all is well with us. Every Latter-day Saint knows that to be found in the discharge of his duty makes him a happy man, and when he is not in the discharge of his duty there is an uneasiness about him which makes him feel that something is wrong. May God bless you, my brethren and sisters; help us to keep the commandments which He has given unto us, and to perform the duties enjoined upon us, to be ready at all times to go abroad and declare the Gospel, or to work in the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home. The best kind of a Latter-day Saint is the man or the woman that is ready for any kind of labor, whether at home or abroad, and has no hobby, no special desire in a certain channel, to the depreciation of everything else. God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER M. W. MERRILL.

Duties of the Saints—Should be reminded of them—A prosperous community—Result of the blessing of God—Answers to prayer—About colonization—Importance of Temple work.

I have listened with a great deal of interest during the meetings of this conference, and I believe it is the largest conference I have ever attended in the Church. Fifty-one years ago the 9th of April I was baptized, when the ice was about three feet thick, and had to be cut away, and I have not lost interest in this work yet. I remember I was quite zealous when I was first

baptized. I was soon ordained a Priest and sent out to teach. I acted two years in that capacity. When I came to this valley I was appointed a Teacher in the North Canyon ward, and labored in that capacity for eight years; and then moved to Cache valley, under the counsel of Apostles Orson Hyde and Ezra T. Benson. I was appointed Bishop there, and acted in that capacity 18 years. Subsequently, I was appointed to labor in the stake presidency with Brother W. B. Preston and acted in that capacity for 10 years. Since that time I have labored in the quorum of the Apostles. But I want to say that there never was a time when I felt that I was really qualified for the position I was called to occupy. I feel the same way yet. There is no disposition in me to boast. I am thankful to the Lord that I have been preserved in the Church for over 50 years, and I hope to continue in it as long as I am alive. I know this work is from the Lord. I know that Joseph Smith was a great Prophet, raised up to usher in this last dispensation of the Gospel. I had evidence of this even before I was baptized, and it has never departed from me. I want to bear record to my brethren and sisters here that there is no other way of retaining the spirit of this work and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost than through faithfulness and diligence in observing to keep the commandments of the Lord. The individual who will be humble all the day long and strive to keep the commandments of the Lord will never apostatize or become dissatisfied, but he or she will be preserved in the truth, and by and by will sit down in the mansions of the Father, to enjoy the blessings of eternal life. People who are spiritually-minded are devoted to the work. They pay their tithes and their offerings; they go to the ward meetings and to the stake meetings, and they are willing to devote their time, their talents and their all for the building up of the kingdom of God on the earth.

We have had credit from the President of the Church during this conference of doing very well in paying our tithing. We have done well, there is no question about that; but let every

individual ask himself if he has come up to the standard. I think we shall be led to conclude that we have not quite got there yet. No doubt, a great many brethren and sisters pay their tithing in full, and if they were to sit in judgment upon themselves they would not need to be judged of others; for they would be able to say in all sincerity, "I have done the best I could." But there is another class who, if they were to sit in judgment upon themselves, would be forced to say they had not come up to the standard. The Lord expects us all, as His servants and handmaidens, to come up to the standard. He expects us to pay our tithing and our offerings in full. The giving of offerings is associated with the payment of tithing—offerings for the benefit of those immediately around us who need our help, to obviate the necessity of the Bishop having to make application to the Church for funds to support the poor. If we were to observe this law strictly, we are amply able in all our wards to support the poor. There are many people in the Church, I have discovered, who are willing to support themselves rather than receive offerings, if they could only be given employment. Even the aged can do something, unless they are maimed or disabled; and this is a matter for the Bishops to look after, to see that people have employment, as far as possible, and to encourage the payment of offerings as well as tithing.

If tithing is never mentioned in a ward from one month's end to another, neither by the Bishop nor the Priests and Teachers, that ward will not come up to the standard. There are lots of people who would come up to the standard if their minds were stirred up by way of remembrance. I am not one who believes that it is proper for the Bishop to be always talking about tithing; but I believe it should be kept before the people. They should be encouraged to pay their tithing when they get it, and not wait till the end of the year. If your salary is paid to you each month, pay your tithing each month. I want to bear testimony that that is the easiest and the best way to pay tithing. Pay it when you get it, and let it be the first

thing. Let us pay our tithing first, and then distribute the rest as far as it will go. If we will do this, we shall find that tithing is easily paid; and when the end of the year comes we shall be glad, and prepared to settle with the Bishop with a cheerful heart.

Take us as a whole people, we are better off than other people, after all, though there are too many of us in debt, with mortgages on our homes. The Lord has blessed us. He has blessed and sanctified our land, and it has brought forth in its strength, in the season thereof.

There is a great deal of faith exhibited among the Latter-day Saints, and that faith, no doubt, will increase as the Saints grow older and get more experience. In the last 50 years I have seen many things that have given me a great deal of joy and increased my faith. I have seen the prayers of the brethren answered. I have seen the prayers of little children answered in the homes of their parents. I remember a few years ago in Cache valley we had a drouth for some years. There was very little snow, and lots of grasshoppers to eat our crops. I remember Apostle Orson Pratt coming to visit us. He went to every settlement in the valley, and he prayed everywhere that the Lord would send moisture upon the mountains and valleys. I traveled with him, and he never forgot this. He always prayed himself in the family circle, and he prayed every time that the snows might come. In fulfillment of his prayers the snows did come, and we had more that year than we had had for years before; the mountains were filled with snow. I have seen evidences of this same thing recently; when prominent Elders of the Church have prayed that the moisture might come, their prayers have been answered and the moisture has come. I do not know of any reason why our prayers should not be answered, if we will pray in faith believing, and not ask amiss or for anything that we ought not to have. Do not let us be discouraged. This is the Lord's work, not ours. We did not place ourselves in position. None of you Presidents of stakes, or Bishops, has ever sought for office or wanted office, so far as I know.

The Lord has called you all. He has opened the eyes of our understanding, that we have been enabled to comprehend the truth in part, and we are supposed to make some progress. I have thought since coming to this conference, that we are making improvement all the time. I do not remember the time when we could see all the presidents of stakes right in front here as we can now, for they have been scattered among the congregation. It is an improvement having the prominent Elders seated where they can hear everything. I have been reminded of the necessity of this in visiting stake conferences and seeing the Bishops and leading Elders scattered among the people. This here is an ensample. Bring your leading Elders to the front, where they can hear and take part in the labors of the conference. This is a grand thing, and a sign of progress and advancement.

My brethren and sisters, I am aware that there are a number of people among us who want to move somewhere, and they are asking about different parts of the country. I have brethren enquire of me frequently, some since I have been here. I want to say this about it: It is all right to go if you are counseled by the authorities of your ward or stake, or by the authorities of the Church. Get good advice, and then, if you go, you will feel that you go with the blessing of the Lord. Do not let any of our people, no matter how desirable a country may be, run off on a tangent, without the advice of the presiding brethren. Go under the direction of the Priesthood, with their consent and good feelings, if you want to go. It may be all right for you to go just where you want to go, but get counsel from the brethren. Do not let us be running up and down the country simply to better our condition, but let us be satisfied to labor under the advice of the Priesthood, and if we will do so, we will come out all right.

Another subject I want to touch upon, and then I will close; it is with regard to temple work. Brethren and sisters, do not forget your temple work. Do not leave your kindred dead who have slumbered in the grave for years, and

perhaps for ages, without going to their rescue and giving them relief, as their Lord has ordained and appointed. Here are the temples of the Lord in this state, wherein you may go and administer for your kindred that have passed away. Do not be so swallowed up in the cares of the world that you will neglect your kindred dead, because we will meet them by and by, and we will have remorse and sorrow if we have not done what we could for them. Remember this, and talk of it in your homes. Let us prepare our records and labor in the interest of our friends who have passed away. Of course, the people are doing very nicely in this matter; but there are many that have not given it consideration yet.

God bless you. Let us be true, faithful, and humble; let us attend to our prayers in the morning and evening, invoking the blessings of the Lord upon us and upon our brethren. Pray for your Bishops and Presidents of Stakes; pray for the authorities of the Church, that they may be guided by the inspiration that comes from God, so that all may be well and prosperous with Israel. God bless you. Amen.

ELDER JOHN W. TAYLOR.

Graduation in the gospel—Blessings the result of obedience to law.

My dear brethren and sisters, I pray that the Spirit of the Lord may direct me in all that I shall say, even that Spirit of truth and righteousness which comes from our heavenly Father. I desire to bear testimony to all that I have heard during this conference. I was very much impressed with a remark made by President Smith, testifying that the people were more faithful and were performing their duties a little better today than they were several years ago. There is no one so well qualified to judge of the Latter-day Saints in the aggregate as President Smith. What impressed me particularly about his remarks was the statement that the growth was a gradual one. It made me think of the word of the Lord unto the Prophet Nephi, when He said, "I will give you line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, that you may know my

mind and will concerning all things." When we plant a tree in the garden, though we should stand by it day and night we could not perceive its growth, because it is so gradual; but go to that tree at the end of six months or a year and you will find that it has made remarkable development; and so on year after year until the tree is fully matured.

I feel strongly impressed in my remarks to touch a little upon the importance of having the Spirit of the Lord with us day by day, to perform the duties of the day. While that which we are doing may not appear to be of any great importance at the time, it will be very evident at the end of a term of months or years that we have made marked progress. Like the tree, the growth will have been gradual. I desire to read some scripture, my brethren and sisters, to show you how our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ attained the perfection which He reached during His lifetime. I will read from the 33rd section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants:

"1. Verily, thus saith the Lord, it shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am,

"2. And that I am the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;

"3. And that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one;

"4. The Father because he gave me of his fullness, and the Son because I was in the world and made flesh my tabernacle, and dwelt among the sons of men.

"5. I was in the world and received of my Father, and the works of Him were plainly manifest;

"6. And John saw and bore record of the fullness of my glory, and the fullness of John's record is hereafter to be revealed;

"7. And he bore record, saying, I saw his glory that he was in the beginning before the world was;

"8. Therefore in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation,

"9. The light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.

"10. The worlds were made by him: men were made by him: all things