

The choir and congregation sang the hymn commencing, "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

#### **PRESIDENT FRANCIS M. LYMAN.**

Need of preparation to perform Priesthood duties.—Admonition to Priesthood and Saints to set themselves in order.—Experienced missionaries should accompany the inexperienced.—"The Lord is pleased with His people," and guiding His Church.

The time of our conference is very precious, and I presume every one who occupies a portion of it feels as though he were in a hurry, and perhaps the congregation sometimes wishes that the speaker would hurry.

This has been one of the most interesting conferences that the Latter-day Saints have ever held, and I believe that it will prove most profitable to the Latter-day Saints for all time. I am convinced that our faith will be strengthened, and that we will return to our homes better prepared for our ministry. When I listened to the elders who are presiding over the missions abroad, I was admonished that it is very important that the body of the Priesthood be suitably trained and prepared for the great work entrusted to our care. It is important that we should be well trained from our first reception of the Priesthood, for no man is fully justified who does not magnify the authority which the Lord confers upon him. This authority, held by nearly all the male members of the Church, has come from the Lord, through His servants; and we are a Church of ministers, teachers, exhorters, expounders of the faith and of the

Scriptures, and are expected to be laboring, efficiently and acceptably, at home and abroad. Missionaries are constantly being called for from among the Latter-day Saints; hundreds of them are needed every year. This Church, I suppose, is doing more in the line of missionary work than any other people of the same number. All the churches have their force of ministers; but I know of no church, except this that is made up entirely of ministers. The ministry in this Church is not confined to the male members; for our sisters are also teachers, and advocates, and expounders of the faith. They have a work in the ministry, besides taking care of their homes and families; but of course they are almost entirely home missionaries. A few of our sisters have gone into the world to preach the Gospel, and I suppose there is no sister in the Church but what would go as readily as the brethren if she were called. And that is the difference in Church membership between the brethren and the sisters, just as Elder Whitney has explained the difference between the authorities of the Church and the people. The Elders are *called* and designated by the voice of the Lord, through His servants, and sustained by the people, to hold the Priesthood, to officiate in the foreign ministry, and to preside in the affairs of the Church generally. The brethren are supposed to be in the work from the time they are ordained.

The Spirit seems to prompt me on this occasion to draw the attention, particularly, of the presiding brethren in the Stakes, and Wards, and quorums to the necessity of giving more care to the interests of the brethren entrusted to their

presidency. We want you to give a little closer attention to their condition. The brethren who have spoken in this conference have seemed inclined to commend to us the importance of the Word of Wisdom. I believe that the presiding brethren in the Church set a suitable example before you, and we feel that it should be carried out by all the various quorums and departments of the Priesthood. You should give greater thought and care to your own condition, my brethren who stand in responsible positions. In this regard I commend to you the counsel of the Twelve and the brethren who preside over us, that we take particular pains to examine ourselves, and to be examined by one another, to be considered, questioned, trained, instructed, corrected and reprov'd, and to be exhorted and placed in order, as you have heard from President Joseph F. Smith. We report to him our condition; we want you to report to us in regard to your condition. We would like you to take particular pains with your brethren. Having first set yourselves in order, set your brethren in order—the High Priests, Seventies, Elders, and members of the lesser priesthood; for you are held responsible, as we are. The First Presidency surely feel that the Twelve should always be in good condition; and when any of these brethren visit you, we would like you to notice them and follow in their footsteps and good examples. You presidents of Stakes and you Bishops, when you are within reach of the Twelve, ask what instructions they have for you and for your assistants in the Priesthood. What is necessary to be done? How shall we take care of those holding the Priesthood who

are entrusted to us. These are questions it would be well for you to ask of the brethren, and they will counsel you. This applies to all the brethren who have the forces of Israel to direct in the different Stakes and Wards and quorums. We ask you to put these forces in order.

As the work requires and as the Lord directs, we make requisitions upon the Presidents of Stakes. We need twenty elders, or forty or fifty, as the case may be, from your Stake. We wish you to furnish us one-third of them veterans, men who have seen service either at home or abroad, men who are established in the faith, and who have ability and integrity. One-third of all we ask for should be trained material, that the young and inexperienced may feel in the presence of these, tried and proven men that they have strength and support, and that they can follow in their footsteps and take instruction from them. How well I remember when I went to Europe in 1860, with President Joseph F. Smith and others. We were young men at that time, and when I was sent out into the missionary field I was placed in the care and company of John Brown, the late Bishop and Patriarch, of Pleasant Grove. Joseph C. Rich, son of Elder Charles C. Rich, was placed in company with James S. Brown. These were two mature, able men, expounders of the faith, men of experience, men of God. So it was with the rest of the brethren. Brother Joseph F. Smith did not need an experienced man with him, for he was already trained, having been four years on the Sandwich Islands, where he had been a faithful and devoted elder. He was a veteran,

although a young man. He had had training and experience such as we had not received. The Presidents of missions should have in the field at least one-third of trained men, and we ask you to furnish that kind to us. We expect them to be in good condition, clean and sweet. We do not want to have to purge and cleanse them when they come here. Bishops, labor with your young men. If they have any faults and failings, let them be corrected, and reprov'd if necessary, at home. Do not let them be humiliated before the brethren when they come here. Have them so well prepared that we shall be proud of them. Take pains with them, and do not leave it for us to do. I do not leave it for the Presidency to train these brethren of the Twelve. I take particular pains with my brethren, and they take particular pains with me. It is their business to help me, and it is my business to help them. We wish you to help one another, and train one another, so that all will be in good condition and none will be ashamed. I would be ashamed, and so would my brethren, if President Smith had to stand up here and say that the Twelve were not in order, that they would not listen to him, nor take instruction from him, and that they would not reform and improve. That would not do at all. No; we try to labor with ourselves. We have our weaknesses, and we need to be trained and cared for, just the same as you and your brethren. We are of the same kind of material, the same kind of flesh and blood. We are of the royal lineage, just as you are; for we have descended from the Father; our Father who is in heaven, and your Father. We are His sons, and our wives

and sisters are His daughters. There is no lineage more royal than that of the Father and the Son. We are the brethren of Jesus, and you, my sisters, are His sisters.

Now, the Lord is pleased with His people and their condition today. I thank the Lord for what we have witnessed here, and for the union that dwells among the Latter-day Saints. I speak in this way because I realize the Bishops, the Presidents and their Counselors, and the High Councilors are here, and we require and expect of you just what the Presidency require and expect of us. The Presidency would not be satisfied unless these Apostles were proper in their conduct and in their lives. When they travel among you, the Presidency feel that they are properly represented, and that the Lord is properly represented among His people. Our lives are before them, as they are before you, and they have no fear concerning us; we have been before you as long as you can remember us. Now, we want your lives to be at least as good as ours. No man should be worse than we are. It is not pleasing to the Lord that your lives should be worse than ours. We want you to be better, to set us a good example, and to help us. You pray for us; we want you to live and labor with us. Bishops, it is a reproach to you when you send men to us that are not in a proper condition, and that have to be labored with here, or at Liverpool, or in any other mission, by the authorities. We ask you to send them to us in proper condition, that we may know they are conscientious, honest, undefiled, pure and clean, that we shall not be ashamed of their conduct when they go out into the world. The life of

an elder is more to the people than anything he says. The chief thing is what a man does. It was what Jesus did, the example He set, that lifts Him above all others. He walked in the fear of God. He loved the Father and honored Him. He did the Father's will, instead of his own. He was submissive to Him. He was without sin. He set the pattern for us. We should be as like Him as it is possible for us to be.

I have felt thankful to the Lord for the ministry of our brethren in this conference. How beautifully and splendidly they have talked to us! In the doctrines they have laid down no mistake has been made. I bear testimony to you, my brethren and sisters in regard to this Church. From its beginning, with thirty or forty members, on the 6th day of April, 1830, I testify to you—for I know as I know that I live—that this Church has been and is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is the work of the Lord. It was brought to the world and established under the personal direction of the Father and the Son. Such a vision and experience was never given before on this earth, so far as we have any account, as the personal appearing of the Father and the Son at the same time. The voice of the Father had been heard several times, presenting His Son; but it was left for the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the nineteenth century, to be the witness of the Father and the Son, that they live, for they both appeared to him in person. And surely the world needed that witness. No man had seen the Father or the Son for many centuries. Their faces had been hid from the world, until the world had come to believe that God was not a

person at all, that He was not really our Father, that we were not in His likeness; or, if He was a personage, that in some mysterious way the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost were just one person. It remained for the Prophet Joseph Smith to bear record to the world that the Father and the Son both lived, and that they are as separate and distinct in their personalities as any father and son on this earth.

I bear testimony that this Church was organized by the Lord, and He has maintained that organization from the Prophet Joseph Smith down to the Prophet Joseph F. Smith, without any mistake; for God has directed the choice of every President, every Counselor, every Apostle, every President of Stake, and every Bishop in this Church. The Lord has done it, and it has not been the work of man. He has designated these men, by His own Spirit and voice, and they stand just where they belong, and they will always stand there as long as they are worthy and are not placed in some other position. The Lord is caring for His work and for His people, and He will do it to the end. I want this testimony to come to this congregation, and to all Israel. It is our business to do our duty and to perform our part of the work; for, as Elder Whitney has testified, we are interested in it as well as the Lord. We share with Him, as His children and His trusted servants. The Gospel has been delivered to us, it is in our hands, and we are expected to be the expounders and teachers of this faith until the world is filled with the light and knowledge and power of God. Amen.