

into my life where I had seen evil spirits subject to that power without even a word being spoken. I realize that those who are set apart and ordained to preside have authority to administer in the ordinances of the gospel and have power over unclean spirits.

I might go on and relate to you many wonderful experiences, but the time will not permit. I rejoice, my brethren and sisters, that the opportunity came into my life, to enjoy the wonderful spirit of missionary work, to associate with the cleanest, most wholesome young men that can be found in the world anywhere, whose lives are clean, and whose habits are an example unto all the world, seeking to bring unto them the power whereby they may be saved. I thank the Lord for this Priesthood, the power whereby we may sanctify our lives unto the renewing of our bodies, and by enduring in faithfulness become the sons of Aaron and Moses, sons of the seed of Abraham and the Church of God, and of the elect of the kingdom. That we might sanctify ourselves by this Priesthood and continue faithful and enjoy the Spirit of the Lord as long as we shall live, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER DAVID A. SMITH

Of the Presiding Bishopric

I rejoice, my brethren and sisters, in the fellowship with you and for this privilege of meeting with you in conference, to be fed spiritually, for I have been fed and I rejoice in this fact.

I have a testimony that God lives; he has been good to me and I have found him to be patient, kind and loving, and I sincerely pray that while I address you this morning he will bless me with the same spirit that has been present in our conference thus far.

Many of our speakers have referred to the good work being accomplished by those who are sent into the mission field and to the wonderful growth and development of young men who are called to this service. It is a fact that the spiritual growth of our young men who go into the mission field is very rapid after they reach their field of labor, and we often refer to this development as a witness of the mercy and goodness of the Lord to those who serve him in faith. I have been wondering if, because of this fact, we neglect to a large degree our opportunities for development at home, looking forward to even a greater service than could be rendered in the mission field with proper preparation beforehand.

For the last year it has been my good fortune and pleasure to labor with many young men who have been preparing to leave for the mission field. Occasionally this question is asked: Why did the Lord keep Joseph Smith waiting for seven years after giving him the first vision? And from the discussion of this question, I have wondered if many of us have not had this

same thought in our minds. Let me refresh your minds by briefly calling your attention to the fact that after Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray and after he had received the wonderful manifestation—the appearance of the Father and the Son, at which time he was commanded not to join any church, but to return to his home and in due time information would be given to him—he waited three years, which seems to have been a time in which he was tried and ridiculed and tempted, but overcame all temptations, his faith in the Lord and determination to serve him increasing. When he had been sufficiently tried and had shown by his faith and his works a desire to carry out the instructions given him and to seek for greater light and knowledge, the Angel Moroni appeared to him, and for four years he was schooled under the direction of this heavenly personage; and finally the plates containing the record of the ancient inhabitants of the American continent were given to him and, little by little, translated, requiring much patience, study and effort upon the part of Joseph Smith.

If we stop to reflect upon this incident and many others that could be called to our attention, we will see how God calls men to positions of great responsibility and provides for their preparation for such service. "Many are called but few are chosen." Is it not possible that many blessings are withheld from us because of our failure to earn those blessings through our faith and our works. In this day opportunity is given to us to prepare in our youth for the service of the Lord, and not only is the opportunity given, but we are commanded to prepare through the organizations provided for us, and known as the priesthood quorums. Isaiah tells us in the following passage when we are to begin to gain knowledge:

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." (Isaiah 28:9, 10.)

We also read in Deuteronomy 32:1-4 the following:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right he is."

I am wondering if some of us have overlooked this fact. Occasionally we hear expressions from members of the Church that would lead us to believe that we cannot expect young men to get the spirit of missionary work at home. Is this a real condition or an imaginary one? When we meet together to worship, we partake

of the same spirit and manifestations that are found in the mission field, and many times to a greater degree. If we will study the matter we will find that this spirit and these manifestations come mainly to those who are serving in faith and who, through their labors, are entitled to these blessings.

If our young men were given greater opportunity to give expression to their thoughts, and were taught to respond to the requirements of the priesthood and the responsibilities placed upon them in the quorums of the Aaronic Priesthood, and to perform the labors required of them in these organizations, laboring at all times in faith and for a purpose under the direction, encouragement and good-will of their parents, their brothers and sisters, and associates, they would, in my opinion, go into the mission field with the same spirit that is developed so soon after they arrive in the field.

What is responsible for this rapid growth and development in the mission field? It is the responsibility which is placed upon them; it is the work required of them. They leave their homes for the mission field with a testimony of the gospel, but that testimony is not developed. They have looked forward for years to an opportunity to serve in the mission field, but as a rule have not been given opportunity to give expression to their thoughts or to discuss the knowledge they have received concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; but when they reach their fields of labor they humble themselves before the Lord and seek the Lord in prayer, just as Joseph Smith sought him. They are touched by the influence of the holy Spirit and they respond to this power and influence.

Now, what justification have we to feel that it is necessary for these young men to go into the mission field before they can develop this attitude toward the things pertaining to the gospel? There are many schools in which we may learn. Some are schools which look to the holy Spirit for light. Under this influence the spiritual growth is much more rapid than otherwise. We have an example of this in the life of Moses. We all know the story of his childhood, how he was taken to the home of Pharaoh, where he grew to manhood, learning from his mother, who was employed as a nurse to care for him, of the teachings of her people concerning God and the hereafter. Moses was far removed from the spirit and influence which comes through these teachings when in the midst of those who partake of this same influence. He learned of the teachings of the world from the masters of Egypt, who, while they had great learning, were not actuated by that influence which comes from above. So, while Moses had faith in God and the teachings of his mother, he had evidently not learned of the great power and could not appreciate fully the promises of the Lord to

his children. An example of this is shown in the third and fourth chapters of Exodus.

Moses seemed curious when he saw the burning bush and he stopped to determine why the bush could burn and yet not be consumed; and God called him and told him of the afflictions of his people, saying:

"Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

"Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:9, 10.)

Had Moses been trained under the proper influences, this no doubt would have been commandment enough for him, but listen to his reply: "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Even with the promise from the Lord to be with him, Moses questioned the power of God to give him strength to accomplish God's purposes. Even after several miracles had been performed by Moses as a sign to him of the power of God, he found excuses for not carrying out the Lord's instructions, and finally Moses said unto the Lord:

"O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

"And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

"Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

"And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

"And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart." (Exodus 4:10-14.)

Is it not possible that blessings were withheld from Moses and given to Aaron, blessings which Moses could have enjoyed had he obeyed the commandments of the Lord in faith?

In the life of Enoch we have another striking example of how the Lord provides a means for the establishment of his work and the preparation of his servants for service in that great work. We are told that in the days of Enoch there was great wickedness upon the earth. In Moses 6:27, 31 and 32 we read the following:

"And he heard a voice from heaven, saying: Enoch, my son, prophesy unto this people, and say unto them—Repent, for thus saith the Lord: I am angry with this people, and my fierce anger is kindled against them; for their hearts have waxed hard, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes cannot see afar off; * * * *

"And when Enoch had heard these words, he bowed himself to the earth, before the Lord, and spake before the Lord, saying: Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant?

"And the Lord said unto Enoch: Go forth and do as I have commanded

thee, and no man shall pierce thee. Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance, for all flesh is in my hands, and I will do as seemeth me good."

Unlike Moses, Enoch did not question the Lord, but he acknowledged his own weakness and his lack of preparation and was willing to be guided by the Lord and prepared for the service required of him. We find that Enoch did not commence his preaching immediately, but was taken into the mountain where the Lord taught him, where he learned precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, finally returning to his people, where he converted a city, and the city was not, for the Lord took it unto himself.

Now, my brethren and sisters, I mention these incidents because it seems to me that there is something lacking, either in our belief, in our training, or in our faith, when we say that young men cannot be prepared at home in the Church for service they render so well under the guiding influence of our heavenly Father in the mission field. How much better they could and would serve while in the mission field if they were thoroughly prepared before leaving. It is so easy to pass the responsibility to someone else, but it requires a real effort to face the responsibility placed upon one when he receives the Priesthood and to perform the labors required of those who are called to such positions, who should labor in faith and humility, knowing and realizing that all things are possible to those who serve the Lord in faith, with a desire to accomplish that which is required by him. Let us keep in mind the words contained in John 15:1-5:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

How many of us belong to that branch which beareth good fruit? How many of us are in danger of being cut off because of our inactivity, because of our failure to take advantage of every opportunity that comes to us for service in this great work?

May we be numbered among the branches that bear fruit; may God purge us that we may bring forth more fruit; may we always abide in him and may his words abide in us, that we may eventually be glorified with that glory which he has promised to those who are faithful in all things. May God help us to see the way; may we be guided by his Spirit that we may go forward and accomplish that which is required of us, doing it in faith and

humility, is my prayer, which I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A sacred solo, "Light of the world," was sung by Cyril Martin.

ELDER CHARLES H. HART

Of the First Council of Seventy

The Apostle Paul, in the opening words of his epistle to the Hebrews, testified as follows:

"God, who in sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

And so we testify that in this generation the same God has spoken through his Son, and through the prophets unto us. Just as it was necessary to supplement the revelations of the Old Testament by the revelations of the New Testament, to which the Apostle Paul testifies, so was it necessary to supplement the revelations of both the Old Testament and the New Testament by the revelations to us in our generation.

The history of this American volume of scripture, this modern volume of scripture, known to us as the Doctrine and Covenants, shows that the Prophet Joseph Smith and also his associates placed a high valuation upon the message, upon the doctrines given to us. Soon after the organization of the Church, indeed about three months afterwards, Joseph was concerned in getting the revelations together for the purpose of publication. In November, 1831, a conference was called at Hiram, Ohio, for the purpose of having these revelations sent down to Missouri and published at the printing office of the Church, then established at Independence, Missouri. On the afternoon of that day, November 1, 1831, there was given to the Prophet Joseph the revelation now embodied as the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, known as the preface. It is so designated in the revelation. This revelation alone is very strong corroborative proof of the divinity of the work through the Prophet Joseph.

Elder Whitney spoke of the Book of Mormon as being one of the strongest corroborative evidences of the divinity of the Master. And so as to the Doctrine and Covenants we may say that it is a very strong book of corroborative testimony in support of the divinity of this latter-day work.

Dr. Eliot, the president emeritus of Harvard, has given us a volume of prefaces of the notable books of the world. Volume 39 of this five-and-one-half-foot library, as it is sometimes called, is a volume devoted entirely to prefaces—prefaces that are deemed worthy to live after the books themselves to which they are prefaces in some instances have lapsed into obsolescence. After considering the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants in the light of the literary standards of the world as to what a preface should be, and after comparing