

bear the keys of your ministry and of the same things which I revealed unto them."

Here was divine authority in these last days, conferred by holy messengers, the same men, Peter, James and John, of whom the Lord Jesus Christ said, in his time: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you." The Lord Jesus himself ordained those three men, and they came, as I have read, and conferred the holy apostleship upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. So here is divine authority to act in the name of the Lord. Our claim is that the authority of the Priesthood has been conferred upon men and given to this Church which is the Church of Christ. It is not given to the nation. But the nation has had divine guidance, as I have said. Individuals not of our Church may have divine guidance; but divine authority, to act in the name of the Lord, to baptize, to lay on hands, to say: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," as the apostles of old said, and then to have them receive it, that is a different proposition.

WITNESSES OF THE BESTOWAL OF DIVINE AUTHORITY

Upon these statements of divine authority we rest our case, as the lawyers say. If these heavenly messengers did not come to Joseph Smith and confer upon him this divine authority, then is our preaching vain and our faith is vain also. But we know, and the world may know also by the fruits of "Mormonism" that there is divine power in this organization. Moreover, we have witnesses. Through Joseph Smith the Lord called three special witnesses, to whom was given the great manifestation of the truth of the Book of Mormon. We have not only three witnesses to the testimony of this divine authority, but we have three hundred thousand of them, and more, that can rise up and testify that by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost they know that this is the work of God, that it is the power of God unto salvation. It is not a form of godliness without any power; it is *the* power of God unto salvation, the salvation of all those who will accept it, in this land and in every other land. That is the difference between this Church and all other churches in the world. We call upon all the world to know that that divine authority is here, in this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that it is nowhere else. God bless you. Amen.

STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

God is in heaven, but he is not far removed from them that seek him. He is a friend who never fails. One can always trust him.

THANKS AND GRATITUDE

I thank God for the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for the great conceptions of life which it offers for the comfort and the encouragement and the hope of all mankind.

I thank him for the Church with all its great institutions, built up and maintained under the power of the holy Priesthood for the

salvation of the souls of men, and for their direction in the great cause of truth.

I thank God for the Saints, the blessed Saints, who make up the Church of Christ, who have testimonies of the divinity of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master; who know of the great mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and who seek to carry forward the mighty work which he was instrumental in establishing. I am grateful to be identified with the Saints of God.

I thank God for the Priesthood, for that great power just spoken of, a very portion of Godhood itself, which enables men to administer the ordinances of the Everlasting Gospel, in the name of Jesus Christ, and with his authority. I am grateful for the fraternity and the friendship which come from associations in the Priesthood.

I thank God for my brethren of the stakes, where my duties call me, for my associations with them, for their uniform kindness and consideration and love. Brethren, I love you, I love you in the bond of the holy Priesthood, and I trust that that bond may always keep us together. Thank God for the handclasp of a man who is united with me in the Priesthood of God. Never neglect those friendships, brethren, be one and you will be Christ's.

I am grateful, beyond my power of expression, for the companionship of my beloved brethren who surround me, my colleagues, my true friends, men whose examples stimulate and encourage me and protect me from temptation and error. I am grateful for their confidence in me, and I have continually prayed that in some measure I might be worthy of that confidence.

The Lord is good. All his judgments are righteous. He makes no mistakes. Never complain at the judgments of God; never mock him. Always trust him. He will never forsake you. Seek the things of eternity; they are worth while. All other things are of but passing worth and comparatively valueless.

Oh, I thank God for the home and for the great conception of family which we have, for the eternity of these sacred and beautiful relationships that under the power of the Priesthood have been established. If there were nothing else given to the world by the Prophet Joseph Smith than our great and beautiful conception of home and family, he would have made the greatest contribution ever made to humanity by any man who has lived.

I praise his great name, the name of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know that his mission was divine. My heart, my soul, and every faculty of which I have possession, confirm that knowledge. The work that he established is the work of the living God.

In your presence, humbly, I consecrate and dedicate all that has been given to me to the establishment of that work. May we all make it prosper as God would have us do, I pray humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.