

produces results of great value," they would say, "then we are indeed interested in finding the power back of it."

As the attitude of intolerance turns to friendly tolerance, we must be fully aware of the fact that our acts are before the bar of friendly evaluation. As we ask our friends of the world to investigate our religion, we are asking them to investigate us as its product. Surely you will loyally stand behind us—without your lives lived on the true Mormon pattern our message to the world may not be made articulate.

In closing, may I suggest a number of resolutions which I offer, first to myself, then to my missionaries, and then to you?

We will demonstrate by our personal and community lives that Joseph Smith is a true prophet of God and has given us a true perspective of the teachings of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

We will preserve our uniqueness, never losing our savor by the compelling impulse to become respectable from the worldly point of view; but always adding savor by the urge to become a respectable member of the Kingdom of God.

We will be a light set upon a hill because we will be different—different in the sense that we will be more industrious and self-reliant, yet more truly our brother's keeper; more honest in business, speech, and thought, yet more forgiving of those who steal, lie, or fail to think straight; more healthy in body and mind through adherence to God's health program, yet more helpful of those who in weakness have lost control of the appetite; more diligent for personal perfection, yet more concerned with brotherly helpfulness; more nearly ideal members of the kingdom, yet more teachable and poor in spirit.

God grant that we may lift high the light of true Christian living, and that the world seeing our good works will glorify our Father which is in heaven—through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

In a revelation given to the Church, March 8, 1831, the Lord said this:

But ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, who giveth liberally; and that which the Spirit testifies unto you, even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils.

Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING PURPORTED REVELATIONS

It seems that periodically it becomes necessary to call attention to the true order the Lord has given us in regard to revelation. During

the past three or four months I have received a number of communications, coming from various parts of the Church, asking if certain purported revelations or dreams or purported visions are reliable and have the endorsement of the Authorities of the Church.

There have been individuals, from time to time, who have been invited to go into the wards, in the sacrament meetings, Priesthood classes, Sunday Schools and Mutual Improvement organizations, and at times, for their special benefit, cottage meetings have been held where they might come and relate remarkable visions or revelations claimed by these individuals to have been given to them. All this is wrong.

KEY REVEALED TO DETERMINE TRUE REVELATION

The Lord has given us, by revelation, a key that should be our guide in matters of this kind. In another revelation that was given to the Church as early as February in the year 1831, the Lord said this:

But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; [speaking of the gift of revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith] for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments;

And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me.

REVELATIONS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAW

The Lord has promised us that he would give us revelation and commandments when necessary, and that is recorded in another of the revelations also given in the same year, 1831, on the seventh day of August. And in that revelation the Lord says, speaking of those who should come to Zion:

And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few, and with revelations in their time—they that are faithful and diligent before me.

Now, the Lord will give revelations to this Church, and he will give commandments to this Church from time to time, and as it is necessary, but always in accordance with his own law; and we do not have to run around and invite individuals who are without authority to relate unto us purported visions, or revelations or commandments, for the guidance of this people.

Everything in the Church is done in order. Everything pertaining to the kingdom of God is in order, because it is obedient to law.

JOSEPH SMITH'S COMMENTS ON REVELATION

In 1833 the Prophet Joseph Smith gave this counsel to the Church:

I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in

authority higher than themselves. Therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them. But if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction, for the fundamental principles, government and doctrines of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom.

Then on another occasion the Prophet gave this other counsel, as it occurs in the *History of the Church*:

President Joseph Smith, Jr., addressed the assembly and said:

The Melchizedek High Priesthood was no other than the Priesthood of the Son of God; that there are certain ordinances which belong to the Priesthood, from which flow certain results; and the Presidents or Presidency are over the Church; and revelations of the mind and will of God to the Church are to come through the Presidency. This is the order of heaven, and the power and privilege of this Priesthood. It is also the privilege of any officer in this Church to obtain revelations so far as relates to his particular calling and duty in the Church. All are bound by the principles of virtue and happiness, but one great privilege of the Priesthood is to obtain revelations of the mind and will of God. It is also the privilege of the Melchizedek Priesthood to reprove, rebuke, and admonish, as well as to receive revelation. If the Church knew all the commandments, one-half they would condemn through prejudice and ignorance.

A High Priest is a member of the same Melchizedek Priesthood with the Presidency, but not of the same power or authority in the Church. The Seventies are also members of the same Priesthood, are a sort of traveling council or Priesthood, and may preside over a church or churches, until a High Priest can be had. The Seventies are to be taken from the quorum of Elders, and are not to be High Priests. They are subject to the direction and dictation of the Twelve, who have the keys of the ministry. All are to preach the Gospel, by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost; and no man can preach the Gospel without the Holy Ghost.

Now, these passages, these statements from the Prophet Joseph Smith, I have presented to you so that you may know how to be governed in regard to matters of this kind. If a man comes among the Latter-day Saints, professing to have received a vision or a revelation or a remarkable dream, and the Lord has given him such, he **should** keep it to himself. It is all out of order, in this Church, for somebody to invite him into a sacrament service to relate that to the Church, because the Lord will give his revelations in the proper way, to the one who is appointed to receive and dispense the word of God to the members of the Church.

SPURIOUS REVELATIONS

In the year 1918, at the October Conference, the last Conference at which President Joseph F. Smith spoke, I called attention to matters of this kind, and after I was through he arose and endorsed my remarks by saying what I am going to read to you now:

Again I feel to say that it is an opportunity for me to say a few words. This wonderful, mysterious revelation that I have been said to have received a great many years ago, was given in French, and I never knew but two or three words of French in my life; consequently I could not

have been the originator of that revelation. I want you to understand that I have denied it, I suppose, a hundred times, when I have been inquired of about it. It was gotten up by some mysterious person who undertook to create a sensation and lay the responsibility upon me. I am not guilty.

When the Lord reveals something to me I will consider the matter with my brethren, and when it becomes proper I will let it be known to the people, and not otherwise.

The ridiculous story about the red horse, and the black horse, and the white horse, and a lot of trash that has been circulated about and printed and sent around as a great revelation given by the Prophet Joseph Smith, is a matter that was gotten up, I understand, some ten years after the death of the Prophet, by two of our brethren who put together some broken sentences from the Prophet that they had heard him utter from time to time, and formulated this so-called revelation out of it. It was never spoken by the Prophet in the manner in which they have it put forth. It is simply false; that is all there is to it.

KNOW THE TRUTH

Now, these stories of revelation, that are being circulated around, are of no consequence, except for rumor and silly talk by persons who have no authority. The fact of the matter is simply this: No man can enter into God's rest until he will absorb the truth, in so far that all error, all falsehood, all misunderstanding and misstatement he will be able to sift thoroughly and dissolve, and know that it is error, and not truth.

When you know God's truth, when you enter into God's rest, you will not be hunting after revelations from Tom, Dick and Harry all over the world. You will not be following the will-o'-the-wisp of the vagaries of men and women who advance nonsense and their own ideas. When you know the truth you will abide in the truth, and the truth will make you free. It is only the truth that will free you from the errors of men and from the falsehoods and misrepresentations of the evil one, who lays in wait to deceive and to mislead the people of God from the paths of righteousness and truth.

God bless you. Amen.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

The burning questions of good and evil constitute the most important problem that has ever confronted the children of men. There is no end to the variations in which this problem presents itself. There are so many manifestations of it that one is almost lost in a labyrinth of confusion.

These questions are often asked: What is good and what is evil? What is sin? What is the cause of sin, and what is its cure? Vice, or gross immorality! What is vice? Listen to the poet:

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.