

It was shown to me that this church must be built up to Joseph, and that all the blessings we receive must come through him. I have been ordained a spokesman to Joseph, and I must come to Nauvoo and see that the church is governed in a proper manner. Joseph sustains the same relationship to this church as he has always done: no man can be the successor of Joseph.

The kingdom is to be built up to Jesus Christ through Joseph: there must be revelation still. The martyred Prophet is still the head of this church; every quorum should stand as you stood in your washings and consecrations. I have been consecrated a spokesman to Joseph, and I was commanded to speak for him: the church is not disorganized, though our head is gone.

We may have a diversity of feelings on this matter; I have been called to be a spokesman unto Joseph, and I want to build up the church unto him, and if the people want me to sustain this place, I want it upon the principle that every individual shall acknowledge it for himself.

I propose to be a Guardian to the people;—in this I have discharged my duty, and done what God has commanded me, and the people can please themselves whether they accept me or not.

Prest. B. Young said:—"I do not care who leads the church, even though it were Ann Lee; but one thing I must know, and that is what God says about it. I have the keys and the means of obtaining the mind of God on the subject."

I know there are those in our midst who will seek the lives of the Twelve, as they did the lives of Joseph and Hyrum. We shall ordain others, and give the fulness of the priesthood, so that if we are killed the fulness of the priesthood may remain.

Joseph conferred upon our heads all the keys and powers belonging to the apostleship which he himself held before he was taken away, and no man or set of men can get between Joseph and the Twelve in this world or in the world to come.

How often has Joseph said to the Twelve, I have laid the foundation, and you must build thereon, for upon your shoulders the kingdom rests.

The Twelve as a quorum will not be permitted to tarry here long; they will go abroad and bear off the kingdom to the nations of the earth, and baptize the people faster than mobs can kill them off. I would like, were it my privilege to take my valise and travel and preach till we had a people gathered who would be true.

My private feelings would be to let the affairs of men and women alone; only go and preach and baptize them into the kingdom of God; yet whatever duty God places upon me, in his strength I intend to fulfil it.

I want to see this people, with the various quorums of the priesthood, assembled together in Special Conference on Tuesday next at 10 a.m., which was carried unanimously, by vote.

Thursday, 8.—"At a special meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, held in Nauvoo, at 10 a.m., on Thursday, Aug. 8, 1844, by the request of President William Marks, (who was then presiding over that Stake of Zion,) to choose a guardian, or President and Trustee, Sidney Rigdon took his position in a wagon, about two rods in front of the stand, and harangued the Saints for about one and a half hours, upon choosing a guardian for the church. The meeting was then dismissed, when President Brigham Young gave out an appointment for the brethren to assemble at 2 p.m.

At the appointed time, the brethren came together. Present of the Twelve, B. Young, H. C. Kimball, P. P. Pratt, O. Pratt, W. Richards, W. Woodruff, Geo. A. Smith. The several quorums were organized on and around the stand according to order.

The meeting being opened, Prest. B. Young arose and said, "ATTENTION ALL! This congregation makes me think of the days of King Benjamin, the multitude being so great that all could not hear. I request the brethren not to have any feelings for being convened this afternoon, for it is necessary; we want you all to be still and give attention, that all may hear. Let none complain because of the situation of the congregation: we will do the best we can."

For the first time in my life, for the first time in your lives, for the first time in the kingdom of God in the 19th century, without a prophet at our head, do I step forth to act in my calling in connection with the quorum of the Twelve, as Apostles of Jesus Christ unto this generation—Apostles whom God has called by revelations through the Prophet Joseph, who are ordained and appointed to bear off the keys of the kingdom of God in all the world.

This people have hitherto walked by sight, and not by faith; you have had the Prophet in your midst. Do you all understand? You have walked by sight, and without much pleading to the Lord to know whether things were right or not.

Heretofore you have had a Prophet as the mouth of the Lord to speak to you, but he has sealed his testimony with his blood, and now, for the first time are you called to walk by faith—not by sight.

The first position I take in behalf of the Twelve and the people is to ask a few questions. I ask the Latter Day Saints, do you, as individuals, at this time, want to choose a prophet or a guardian? Inasmuch as our Prophet and Patriarch are taken from our midst, do you want some one to guard, to guide and lead you through this world into the kingdom of God, or not? All that want some person to be a guardian, or a prophet, a spokesman, or

something else, signify it by raising the right hand. (No votes.)

When I came to this stand I had peculiar feelings and impressions; the faces of this people seem to say, we want a shepherd to guide and lead us through this world. All that want to draw away a party from the church after them, let them do it if they can, but they will not prosper.

If any man thinks he has influence among this people to lead away a party, let him try it, and he will find out that there is power with the Apostles, which will carry them off victorious through all the world, and build up and defend the church and kingdom of God.

What do the people want? I feel as though I wanted the privilege to weep and mourn for thirty days at least; then rise up, shake myself, and tell the people what the Lord wants of them; although my heart is too full of mourning to launch forth into business transactions and the organization of the church. I feel compelled this day to step forth in the discharge of those duties God has placed upon me.

I now wish to speak of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. If the church is organized, and you want to know how it is organized, I will tell you. I know your feelings—do you want me to tell your feelings?

Here is President Rigdon, who was counselor to Joseph. I ask, where are Joseph and Hyrum? They are gone beyond the veil; and if Elder Rigdon wants to act as his counselor, he must go beyond the veil where he is.

There has been much said about President Rigdon being President of the church and leading the people, being the head, &c., &c. Brother Rigdon has come 1600 miles to tell you what he wants to do for you. If the people want Prest. Rigdon to lead them, they may have him; but I say unto you that the quorum of the Twelve have the keys of the kingdom of God in all the world.

The Twelve are appointed by the finger of God. Here is Brigham, have his knees ever faltered? Have his lips ever quivered? Here is Hyrum, and the rest of the Twelve, an independent body, who have the keys of the priesthood, the keys of the kingdom of God to deliver to all the world: this is true, so help me God. They stand next to Joseph, and are as the First Presidency of the church.

I do not know whether my enemies will take my life or not, and I do not care, for I want to be with the man I love.

You cannot fill the office of a Prophet, Seer and Revelator: God must do this. You are like children without a father, and sheep without a shepherd. You must not appoint any man at our head, if you should the Twelve must ordain him. You cannot appoint a man at our head, but if you do want any other man or men to lead you, take them and we will go our way to build up the kingdom in all the world.

I know who are Joseph's friends, and who are his enemies. I know where the keys of the kingdom are, and where they will eternally be. You cannot call a man to be a prophet; you cannot take Elder Rigdon and place him above the Twelve; if so, he must be ordained by them.

I tell you there is an over anxiety to hurry matters here; you cannot take any man and put him at the head, you would scatter the Saints to the four winds, you would sever the priesthood; so long as we remain as we are, the heavenly head is in constant co-operation with us; and if you go out of that course, God will have nothing to do with you.

Again, perhaps some think that our beloved brother Rigdon would not be honored, would not be looked to as a friend; but if he does right, and remains faithful, he will not act against our counsel, nor we against his, but act together, and we shall be as one.

I again repeat, no man can stand at our head, except God reveals it from the heavens.

I have spared no pains to learn my lesson of the kingdom in this world, and in the eternal world; and if it were not so, I could go and live in peace; but for the gospel, and your sakes, I shall stand in my place. We are liable to be killed all the day long. You have never lived by faith.

Brother Joseph the Prophet has laid the foundation for a great work, and we will build upon it: you have never seen the quorums built one upon another. There is an almighty foundation laid, and we can build a kingdom such as there never was in the world: we can build a kingdom faster than Satan can kill the Saints off.

What do you want? Do you want a Patriarch for the whole church? To this we are perfectly willing. If bro. Samuel H. Smith had been living, it would have been his right and privilege; but he is dead, he is gone to Joseph and Hyrum; he is out of the reach of bullets and spears, and he can waft himself with his brothers, his friends and the Saints.

Do you want a Patriarch? Here is brother William left; here is Uncle John Smith, uncle to the Prophet Joseph, left; it is their right; the right of the patriarchal blessings belongs to Joseph's family.

Do you want a Trustee in Trust? Has there been a Bishop who has stood in his lot yet? What is his business? To take charge of the temporal affairs, so that the Twelve and the elders may go on their business. Joseph condescended to do their business for them. Joseph condescended to offer himself for President of the United States, and it was a great condescension.

Do you want a spokesman? Here are Elder Rigdon, bro. Amasa Lyman (whom Joseph expected to take as a counselor), and myself. Do you want the church properly organized, or do you want a spokesman to be chief cook

and bottle washer? Elder Rigdon claims to be spokesman to the Prophet. Very well, he was; but can he now act in that office? If he wants now to be a spokesman to the Prophet, he must go the other side of the veil, for the Prophet is there, but Elder Rigdon is here. Why will Elder Rigdon be a fool? Who knows anything of the priesthood, or of the organization of the kingdom of God? I am plain.

Does this church want it as God organized it? or do you want to clip the power of the priesthood, and let those who have the keys of the priesthood go and build up the kingdom in all the world, wherever the people will hear them?

If there is a spokesman, if he is a king and priest, let him go and build up a kingdom unto himself, that is his right, and it is the right of many here, but the Twelve are at the head of it.

I want to live on the earth and spread truth through all the world. You Saints of Latter Days want things right. If 10,000 men rise up and say they have the Prophet Joseph Smith's shoes, I know they are impostors. In the priesthood you have a right to build up a kingdom, if you know how the church is organized.

Now, if you want Sidney Rigdon or William Law to lead you, or any body else, you are welcome to them; but I tell you, in the name of the Lord, that no man can put another between the Twelve and the Prophet Joseph. Why? Because Joseph was their file leader, and he has committed into their hands the keys of the kingdom in this last dispensation, for all the world: don't put a thread between the priesthood and God.

I will ask, who has stood next to Joseph and Hyrum? I have, and I will stand next to him. We have a head, and that head is the apostleship, the spirit and power of Joseph, and we can now begin to see the necessity of that apostleship.

Bro. Rigdon was at his side—not above. No man has a right to counsel the Twelve but Joseph Smith. Think of these things. You cannot appoint a Prophet, but if you let the Twelve remain and act in their place, the keys of the kingdom are with them, and they can manage the affairs of the church, and direct all things aright.

Now all this does not lessen the character of President Rigdon; let him magnify his calling, and Joseph will want him beyond the veil: let him be careful what he does, lest that thread which binds us together is cut asunder. May God bless us all. (Much more was said by Prest. Young, but not written.)

Amasa Lyman said:—"I do not rise to electioneer. I am gratified with the open, frank and plain exposition of President Young. He has seen the relation I bear to my deceased brother; I never did conceive it gave me a precedence to go before the Twelve."

I do not make exceptions to anything he has said. I believe there is no power, or officer, or means wanted to carry on the work, but what is in the Twelve. I am satisfied that no man can carry on the work, but the power that is in the Twelve, as has been stated.

There is one thing to secure the salvation of this people, and that is not in union alone, it is for you to know the right and be united—it has been presented to you by President Young, and I will back him up. All I design to do is to redeem my pledge.

President Young has stood next to the Prophet Joseph, with the Twelve, and I have stood next to them, and I will stand next to them. I have been at the back of Joseph Smith, and will be at the back of the Twelve for ever, and then we will be saved.

There is no need of a President. We have a head here. What is that head? The quorum of the Twelve Apostles are the head. We now see the necessity of the apostleship.

I might rise up as well as any other man to ask for the Presidency, but I could not do it without endangering my salvation. This is the power that turns the key to bestow salvation through all the land, in the way that Joseph commenced it—the first one called to do the same in all the world—if Joseph Smith had any power to bear off the kingdom of God, the Twelve have the same.

I could not advocate a choosing of a President, and myself a candidate: so then you know the place I occupy is, to stand to the Twelve the same as the Twelve did to Joseph, either on one side or the other; I do not want to go before them, or to fall asleep. I want to see the kingdom roll forth by our united faith and efforts.

President Rigdon called upon W. W. Phelps to speak in his behalf, as he could not speak. W. W. Phelps arose and said:—"With the knowledge that I have I cannot suppose but that this congregation will act aright this day. I believe enough has been said to prepare the minds of the people to act."

I have known many of them for 14 years, and I have always known them to submit with deference to the authorities of the church. I have seen the elders of Israel and the people take their lives in their hands, and go without purse or scrip in winter and in summer. I have seen them prepare for war, and ready to pour out their hearts' blood, and that is an evidence that they will walk by counsel.

I am happy to see this little lake of faces, and to see the same spirit and disposition manifested here to-day, as it was the day after the bloody tragedy, when Joseph and Hyrum Smith were brought home dead, to this city; then you submitted to the law's slow delay, and handed the matter over to God; and I see the same thing to-day, you are now determined as one man to sustain the authorities of the church, and I am happy that the men who were on

Joseph's right and left hand submit themselves to the authority of the priesthood.

I have feelings about this, especially for President Rigdon, and I want to say that there is a quorum that the Twelve belong to, and that the people will receive an endowment. I brought President Rigdon into that quorum, and he received in part the blessings; I could not bear the thought of President Rigdon going into the world without his endowment, he did obtain part, and I hope he will submit.

I want brother Amasa to stand on the side of the Twelve, and they are wanted there still, let them go on and sustain them in that high office. You cannot put in a guardian of the church.

We have hitherto walked by sight, and if a man wanted to know anything he had only to go to brother Joseph. Joseph has gone, but he has not left us comfortless.

I want to say that brother Joseph came and enlightened me two days after he was buried: he came the same as when he was alive, and in a moment appeared to me in his own house. He said, tell the drivers to drive on. I asked if the building was on wheels? He said certainly. I spoke, and away it went. We drove all round the hills and valleys. He then told the drivers to drive on over the river into Iowa. I told him Devil Creek was before us. He said drive over Devil Creek; I don't care for Devil Creek or any other creek; and we did so—then I awoke.

There is a combination of persons in this city, who are in continual intercourse with William and Wilson Law, who are at the bottom of the matter to destroy all that stand for Joseph, and there are persons now in this city who are only waiting power to murder all the persons that still hold on to Joseph; but let us go ahead and build up the Temple, and then you will be endowed; when the Temple is completed, all the honorable mothers in Israel will be endowed, as well as the elders.

If you want to do right, uphold the Twelve; if they die, I am willing to die with them; but do your duty, and you will be endowed. I will sustain the Twelve as long as I have breath.

When Joseph was going away, he said he was going to die, and I said I was willing to die with him; but as I am now alive, as a lawyer in Israel, I am determined to live.

I want you all to recollect that Joseph and Hyrum have only been removed from the earth, and they now counsel and converse with the Gods beyond the reach of powder and ball.

P. P. Pratt said:—"What has been said has been well said. If there are men here who are our enemies, I'll tell you when they will cease to be here: they will be here while you will deal with them. If I exchange property or deal with men, I do it with those whom I know to be faithful."

If there are wicked men here, it is because we support them. Stop dealing with them, and they will go away. Will I support them? No. I would deal with all honest men whom I know to be such.

I am willing to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. Our enemies will cease to dwell here when you cease to deal with them. Mobs and wicked men will cease, when you cease to support them.

I know we can all live and be happy too, when we deal with honest men. If a man wants a doctor or a lawyer, he will send directly for the worst man he can find.

I would die a natural death sooner than I would have a wicked doctor to help me off. I would go without suing all the days of my life before I would go to a lawyer to sue. I will not say anything about the merchants, because you all know them.

Prest. B. Young again arose and said:—"There is more business than can be done this afternoon, but we can accomplish all we want to have done without calling this convention of the whole church. I am going to present to you the leading items."

I do not ask you to take my counsel or advice alone, but every one of you act for yourselves; but if brother Rigdon is the person you want to lead you, vote for him, but not unless you intend to follow him and support him as you did Joseph, do not say so without you mean to take his counsel hereafter.

And I would say the same for the Twelve, don't make a covenant to support them unless you intend to abide by their counsel, and if they do not counsel you as you please, don't turn round and oppose them.

I want every man before he enters into a covenant, to know what he is going to do; but we want to know if this people will support the priesthood, in the name of Israel's God. If you say you will, do so.

We want men appointed to take charge of the business that did lay on the shoulders of Joseph. Let me say to you that this kingdom will spread more than ever.

The Twelve have the power now, the Seventies, the Elders and all of you can have power to go and build up the kingdom in the name of Israel's God. Nauvoo will not hold all the people that will come into the kingdom.

We want to build the Temple, so as to get our endowment; and if we do our best, and Satan will not let us build it, we will go into the wilderness and we will receive the endowment, for we will receive an endowment anyhow.

Will you abide our counsel? I again say, my soul for any man's, if they will abide our counsel, that they will go right into heaven. We have all the signs and tokens to give to the porter at the door, and he will let us in.

I will ask you as quorums, do you want brother Rigdon to stand forward as your leader, your guide, your spokesman. Prest. Rigdon wants me to bring up the other question first, and that is, Does the church want, and is it