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TRY THE SPIRITS.

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I will read a few words from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians:

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

(Now that he ascended, what it is but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the working of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to receive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

In these words Paul sets forth with great plainness the reasons why there should be Apostles and Prophets in the Church of Christ. They were necessary, he says, to bring the Saints to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God. When this Church was organized it had in it Apostles; it had the Priesthood. It is a remarkable thing that the Prophet Joseph Smith, although gifted by the Lord with revelations and with power to translate the Book of Mormon, and though he had received the ministration of angels, and had even been permitted to behold the Father and the Son, yet he never presumed to officiate in any of the ordinances of the Gospel until he was ordained. One might think, that, having had such high privileges and blessings bestowed upon him, he would have thought he had the authority to administer the simple ordinance of baptism. But he did not. He awaited the bestowal of the authority. And he received it—not from man, because there was not a man on the face of the earth that we know of that held the authority, but from a messenger of God, endowed with the power to bestow the authority. John the Baptist

came and announced himself as the servant of God who held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, being a literal descendant of Aaron, by virtue of which authority he had baptized the Son of God in the waters of Jordan. This heavenly messenger came qualified in every way to bestow upon the men to whom he was sent the authority to baptize. Could there be any more suitable personage thought of than the one who had baptized the immaculate Son of God himself? Concerning him Jesus said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Yet John the Baptist never did any miracles. But what greater honor could a man have than to come in the flesh and baptize the Son of God? That holy being, I say, came and laid his hands upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and ordained them to the Aaronic Priesthood, by virtue of which they had authority to baptize. Then there was something else needed. John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Though John had the authority to baptize the Son of God, he did not have the authority to baptize with "the Holy Ghost and with fire." He did not have the authority to confirm upon men and women the Holy Ghost; but he said that one should come after him with that power—referring to Jesus. Jesus ordained men, He himself having been ordained. We do not have the full account of what Jesus received; but we know that angels administered unto Him, and He did not presume to act in the ministry, though He was the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world, until He had been ordained to that authority. You remember what took place in the transfiguration on the mount. He was there ministered to by heavenly beings, and He and they doubtless ministered to Peter, James and John. He ordained twelve Apostles, and sent them forth as witnesses with the same power and authority which He himself had received. In speaking to them on one occasion, He said, in answer to a question put by Peter: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Although they were the intimate companions of the Son of God, they did not go forth until He had ordained them to the authority which He himself had exercised. He selected these twelve out of the disciples that followed Him and gave unto them the Apostleship, by the authority of which

they were able to do all that Paul said the Apostles should do—to regulate the affairs of the Church, to teach sound doctrine, to be, in fact, revelators, prophets and seers, when the occasion should demand it; to possess all the gifts that God gives to man in the flesh. They were ordained to this, and until they were they did not presume to go forth and minister in the authority among the children of men. But when they received this authority they went forth, accompanied by mighty power; and they cast out devils, healed the sick, and performed many wonderful works in the name of the Lord and through the authority which they had received from Him. While the Church was under their guidance the members thereof were not carried about by every wind of doctrine. They were not deceived by the sleight of men, nor their cunning craftiness. They knew that while they followed the guidance of these inspired and divinely-authorized men, there was no danger of division or strife; but they were led to the unity of the faith. Therefore, in the last days, God being about to restore His Church in its primitive purity and power to the earth, He deemed it necessary to bestow the Apostleship once more upon men. After the Aaronic Priesthood had been conferred, therefore, and John the Baptist had transmitted that power (which had been taken from the earth through the wickedness of men and the shedding of the blood of those who bore it) again to the earth, others came from the mansions of bliss and committed to men once more in the flesh the keys and the authority which they had held when they were in the flesh, and which keys and authority were necessary to complete the great work of God in the last days. The Lord, when He was upon the earth, said unto Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Peter, James and John were the three presiding High Priests over the Church of Christ, after the Savior's departure; and these three Apostles descended from the mansions of glory and laid their hands upon the heads of these two young servants of God in this day and ordained them to the authority which they held, committing unto them all the keys and powers of Priesthood which they had received in their day, and which had not been transmitted by them to any others, because of the wickedness of the children of men. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained to the Apostleship of the Son of God by Peter and his fellow Apostles,