

married, without realizing the character of the obligations that they take upon themselves, or the covenants that they make, and the promises involved in the taking of these covenants. The result is, hundreds among us go to the House of the Lord and receive these blessings and come away without having any particular impression made upon them. I think that this is deplorable. When men have gifts and blessings bestowed upon them and they do not value them, they become a cause of condemnation rather than blessing. It seems to me that there should be exceeding great care taken in this respect. I would rather—though I would not like it—a son of mine be married by a Bishop than to have him go to the Temple in an unfit condition and receive these blessings. It would be far better for him.

This Priesthood that the Lord has restored is a far more important thing than even the most advanced of us can appreciate at the present time. We who bear this Priesthood act in God's stead in the midst of the people; we are the representatives of God—the ambassadors, so to speak, of the Savior, who has given us this Priesthood; and the duties of this calling are most important, because they affect the salvation of the children of men.

I have heard a great many inquiries at different times in relation to the rewards that we are to receive after we get through with this life. The Lord has told us in great plainness that "the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." In the first section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants the Lord makes a very impressive remark. He says: "Unto the day when the Lord shall come to recompense unto every man according to his work, and measure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man." I have been greatly impressed with this of late, and I think it a most important announcement. We shall have to answer at the judgment seat of our God for the deeds done in this life. There will be no escape from it. We may be successful in achieving certain ends in this life, regardless of the righteousness of those ends. A great many people think if they are only successful in that which they do, the rightfulness of it does not matter much. But whoever acts with this idea in mind takes a wrong view, and some day or other will have cause to repent with great sorrow; for I say to you, as a servant of God, that you cannot do wrong without having to atone for that wrong sooner or later. There is no human being can escape the justice of our Father in heaven. Hence it is of exceeding great importance that we should obtain the forgiveness of our sins as we go along, and not let them accumulate against us. If we do wrong to a neighbor; if we do wrong to our families, or any member of them, it should be our aim not to rest until we have made that right with the one whom we have wronged, no matter how humble or how lowly the one may be. We do not know the rewards that God has in store for His faithful children. I often think of the parable which Jesus gave of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man never suspected that the poor, wretched creature who sat and gathered the crumbs that fell from his table was a

favorite of heaven. He possessed riches; all his earthly desires were gratified; and in the plenitude of his power he never thought of the poor man. But death came, and he lifted up his eyes in torment; while the poor creature that was so insignificant and contemptible in his eyes was received into Abraham's bosom, and the remark was made to the rich man, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." There is many a humble and lowly man whom God loves. Many who are conspicuous, and who think in their pride that they are all right and they can do as they please, will find that there is a day when they, with all of us, will be judged for the deeds done in the body. Nothing then will escape the recollection of Jehovah; no act of our lives can be hidden; no word that we have ever spoken that has been harsh, cruel and wrong will ever be forgotten or blotted out, unless we have obtained forgiveness for it. The Presidency of the Church, standing at the head of the people, cannot be harsh or cruel; they cannot presume upon their authority, without having to answer for it. Neither can the Twelve, though they have great authority, do this; nor the Presidents of Stakes, nor High Councilors, nor Bishops. They cannot presume on their authority and do things that God will not approve. God will not sanction wrong, if it be committed by an Apostle, or by one of the First Presidency. He cannot do it, because it is contrary to His attributes. A man may in his arrogance think, "I am a great man; I hold a high position; what matters it about these lowly people?" But the moment he entertains that feeling, God leaves him to himself. Have we not seen it in this life? Have we not seen the wrongdoer, proud and lifted up, totter over, God withdrawing His Spirit from him and leaving him to himself? And will not this go on? Yes, in eternity; and we will get the measure measured to us that we measure to our fellow men, just as sure as God has spoken. If we have been merciful, kind, sympathetic, filled with charity and love, we will have these repaid to us; but if we have not exercised these heavenly qualities, we may depend upon it, unless we have repented and made atonement, they will be measured to us in the same manner that we have measured them to others. God is just, and He cannot even wink at iniquity, much less countenance it.

Therefore, if any have been oppressed, let them put their trust in God; let them bring their troubles to Him and leave their case with Him. We can all do this with perfect safety. He is not asleep; He has not gone on a journey; He is not deaf; but He is a living God, and He will hear the prayers of His children when they are offered to Him in humility and meekness. We need not quarrel, therefore, we need not find fault with the Priesthood, nor with the organization of the Church; we need not stumble because we feel we have been wronged. All we need to do is to keep straight ourselves; to walk so that we shall have the testimony of a good conscience, and have the witness that God has forgiven us and we stand without condemnation before Him. Then we can leave the rest, perfectly confident that He will take care of it, and He will vindicate us in His own due time. In

the midst of trouble and affliction, in deep water or in the fiery furnace, He will be with us, on the right hand and on the left, to buoy us up, to strengthen us, and to carry us off victorious, as long as we put our trust in Him and serve Him with all our hearts. This is a glorious feature about this God of ours. This religion that He has taught us brings these hopes to us, and we know that they are not unfounded. They are hopes that are based upon eternal truth and upon eternal justice—attributes of our God.

Another thing that I have heard spoken of is that people get anxious about the glories and the exaltation they are going to receive. The teaching of theology in our Sunday schools and theological classes gives rise to many questions, some of which are simple and some have a good deal of meaning. There are a great many people who are thinking all the time about the celestial glory, and want to get there. It is a very good wish. It certainly is a most desirable blessing. But do you know that if we were in the celestial glory and were not fitted for it, we would not enjoy it? Whence comes your enjoyment? Whence come the glorious feelings that you have when you feel the best? Do they come from the outside? Do external circumstances produce real happiness, of the kind that I describe? Doubtless they contribute to happiness; but the purest joy, the greatest happiness, that which is most heavenly, proceeds from within. A man must carry the principles of happiness and the love of God in his own breast, or he will not be happy. It is not true enjoyment when it comes from any other source. Not from without, therefore, must we expect happiness and exaltation, but from within. Deity is within us, and its development brings happiness and joy inexpressible. Hence it is that when the Latter-day Saints were in their deepest sorrow and greatest privations no happier beings could be found. The same with the Elders who go out and meet with rebuff on every hand; their joy is indeed great. Why is it? It is because of their poverty, because of their hunger, because they are destitute of clothing, or because doors are closed in their faces and they are refused lodgings and food? No, it is not these external circumstances; but it is because they have within themselves a fountain of joy—the Holy Ghost. They have God with them, and therefore can rejoice with exceeding great joy. Let a man possessing that spirit be sent to hell with a mission of mercy and he will be happy. Put a man that does not have it in the society of angels and he will not be happy. Therefore, it is true, to a certain extent, that our heaven is what we ourselves contribute to make it. If you have heaven, you must make it. At the same time you must not forget to call upon God and to live so that He will bestow it upon you. Give a man a palace to live in; give him everything that human heart can desire, and that is not heaven. He must have heaven in his own bosom. I see a number in this congregation who have been imprisoned in the penitentiary for obeying a law which they considered divine. They know that prison walls and prison fare do not drive away happiness. They lived above those things,—in another atmosphere. They had enjoyment that God gave them. It was within themselves, and it was not dependent upon