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THE TRUE CHURCH.

Discourse delivered at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Saturday, April 7, 1894, by

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I have enjoyed myself very well during this Conference, and I trust that the same spirit that has animated my brethren will also rest upon me. I believe that I feel the importance of these gatherings and of the business transacted on occasions like this more today than ever before in my life.

In the month of January I was called to go into Southern California on a brief mission, and it fell to the lot of Elder B. H. Roberts to be my companion and spokesman. We spent nearly two months, and in several important cities in Southern California obtained halls, advertised, and gave the people the privilege of hearing the Gospel as we have received it. We found that there are other people in the world who claim to be Latter-day Saints and followers of the Prophet Joseph and our hearers were somewhat confused to know whether they should listen to us or to others who claimed to be the legitimate successors of the Prophet Joseph and the Church that he established. I am reminded that this Conference makes about one hundred and one conferences of the Church that have been held since the death of the Prophet Joseph. Examining the history, we find that at the death of the Prophet Joseph there were standing, in their places in the Church, ten of the Twelve Apostles, including Brigham Young, President of the Twelve Apostles—ten of the very men who were designated by the voice of God himself as the chosen Twelve in this last dispensation to bear the keys of the Kingdom of God among all the nations of the earth. From then until now the Latter-day Saints have gathered together twice every year and by their unanimous vote have sustained the men who were designated by the voice of the Lord to bear the keys of the kingdom. Today you see on this stand ten of that same quorum who have been selected and designated by the voice of God to fill vacancies occasioned by death, or by the re-organization, from time to time, of the First Presidency of the Church. From the day of the Prophet Joseph until the present time there has not been a conference but has sustained, by unanimous vote, the men that were selected by the Lord during the days of

the Prophet Joseph, or their lawfully selected successors, chosen by the voice of God just as perfectly as they were selected in the days of the Prophet Joseph. There has never been a man placed in this quorum or in the Presidency of the Church but has been placed there by the word of God; and they have been sustained by the people up to the present time. I have thought it would be wise if we would keep an account individually of the line of the priesthood that is given to us, so that every man may know that he received his ordination from men in fellowship with the Church. It takes the whole of the quorum of the Twelve to hold the keys of the kingdom; one cannot lead off from the body and build up a kingdom himself. Every Apostle is subject to the direction and counsel of the Presidency of the Church. With all the authority and power that an Apostle holds, he has no right to go to California, or to any part of the earth, and build up a church independent of the direction and counsel of the Presidency of the Church. Yet every Apostle, in his labors and travels in the earth under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church, has power to organize churches and to regulate them in all parts of the earth. And when there is no First Presidency the Twelve are the presiding quorum over the Church. The Lord provided that the quorum of the Twelve Apostles should be equal in authority to the First Presidency of the Church for the very emergencies that arise whenever a president of the Church passes away; so that there should still be a quorum with the same authority as the Presidency of the Church. But can one of these Apostles separate and, without asking any odds of his brethren in the quorum or of the Presidency of the Church, build up a church and accomplish the purposes of the Lord? No. Whenever an Elder, a High Priest, a Seventy, or an Apostle leads off on his own account and operates contrary to the rules and regulations of the Church as the Lord has laid them down, Amen to that man's authority. There have been but about two of the Twelve who have gone off and undertaken to establish a church unto themselves—William Smith and Lyman Wight. President Rigdon led off also, but he was never one of the Twelve. The authority and power that Apostles hold must be exercised upon the principles of righteousness and in accordance with church rule and discipline or their operations are void in sight of God.

We find that the "Josephites" claim that we have been cast out; that when we left Nauvoo and came into the wilderness we were going away from Zion; that Missouri is Zion and no other

part of the country. But, fortunately, the Prophet Joseph, during the very last conference of the Church that he attended—in April, 1844—announced that America, both North and South, is Zion, and on the following day the Prophet Hyrum Smith announced the same fact. It would be very small for our Heavenly Father to be satisfied with the State of Missouri. Why, we would want the State of Missouri with just the few Latter-day Saints there are today. We occupy very much more country than there is in the state of Missouri. But this is the land of Zion; from one extreme to the other, as announced by the prophets of God. The "Josephites" hold that when we left Nauvoo we went wrong because we were going away from Jackson County, Missouri. I wonder if we had not good company when we left Independence. The Prophet Joseph was at the head of the people when they departed from Independence and went to Far West and to Adam-Ondi-Ahman, and on up to Nauvoo. The Prophet was with the people in all these movements. Not only that, but he crossed the Mississippi and was on his way for the west when his friends—his false friends—began to complain that he was cowardly and like a shepherd leaving the sheep. The Prophet Joseph replied, "If my life is not valuable to you, it is not to me." And to all human appearances the Prophet Joseph would have been living today and at our head had it not been for that. But the Prophet Joseph directed us here. He announced before his death that many of the brethren who were present on a certain occasion, while across the river in Iowa, would live to go to the Rocky Mountains and would help build cities, towns and villages. He understood that, as also did the Prophet Brigham and his brethren—the very men that were designated by the voice of the Lord. Read of this, if you please, in the revelation given in 1841. The Lord says:

"I give unto you my servant Brigham Young to be a president over the Twelve traveling Council."

Which Twelve hold the keys to open up the authority of my kingdom upon the four corners of the earth, and after that to send my word to every creature;

They are: Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, William Smith, John Taylor, John E. Page, Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, Geo. A. Smith."

Every one of these men stood solid and firm by the side of the Prophet Brigham after the death of the Prophet Joseph. Later some of them fell away, but not very many. Apostles have not apostatized and fallen away from the Church since the days of the Prophet Joseph so frequently as they did before. They have been men who have been found