DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

piscoarse delivered at the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the Tabernacle, Sait Lake City, Friday Afternoon, April, 5, 1901, by

ELDER MATTHIAS F. COWLEY.

Improvement in Financial Affairs of the Church-Organization of New Stakes of Zion-Necessary Official Changes in the Priesthood-Differences Among Brethren Should be Avoided-President of the Church and Other Authorities Should be Sustained.

My brethren and sisters: I suppose | that I need not ask for your faith and prayers. I always need them, and I understand it to be our duty to consider ourselves responsible as well as the speaker for the measure of the Holy spirit that we enjoy. It is our duty also to pay the strictest attention to all that is said, and to be imbued with a determination to carry out the instructions which are given unto us. The Latter-day Saints are under-

good to be a practical people. Paul ald concerning the former-day Saints hat the Lord would "purify unto himeff a peculiar people, zealous of good I read in the newspaper restatement made by a man legislative office, to the effect to see the wiping out of y which characterized the 1 say, God grant wiped out, that spirit of the Gospel shall never de-trom us, that the principles which obliterated, and that we our children's children that Joseph et of the living God ple which God revealed , and that he laid his tur to establish the truth bich he enunciated h to the Latter-day its, and that it will become more act and pronounced as the years As the work of God progresses ought to progress.

FINANCES OF THE CHURCH. It has been now two years and a haif ince we first sustained President Lo-enzo Snow as the successor of Presi-ent Wilford Weodruff, as the Prophet, ser and Revelator unto this Church, want to hear my testimony to the atter-day Saints that the work of God has always prospered, and that it has prospered most remarkably during the ast two years and a half. Through combination of circumstances that sibly could not be avoided, and that ive been met by the servants of God very best of their ability, the hurch has been involved financially; der the direction of the Spirit of God in President Snow this financial digation has been greatly reduced. he hand of the Lard has been maniest in his administration to a remark ible extent. He has blessed the Lot-er-day Saints with the spirit to rethe call that was made by resident Snow some two years ago for of the law of tithing The Latter-day Saints quite general have responded to this call, and God has blessed them for so doing. The spir. lly disseminated among the Saints than ever has been. The presiding Counof Seventies have done a remarkably he quorums of Seventies throughout he Stakes of Zion. The Seventies onstitute one of the most substantial energede and faithful bodies of men ex-ising in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the preaching and labors of this Council are to be mended. Their visits to the Stake onferences are but a small part of their work. They are constantly conelering the obligation and responsi-Seventles of this Church, namely, to be ressengers of God to the inhabitants of the earth; and they are all the time seeking to more thoroughly effect the organization of these quorums and to postrinate them in the principles of a everlasting Gospel, I believe that manthorities of the Church generally are sought to perform the duties of We have, however, our vaknesses, and we do not feel superior our brethren who occupy different stions throughout the Stakes stions throughout the Stakes of Zian. The Presidency of this Church. the Twelve Apostles, the First Seven Presidents of Seventies, the Presidents of Seventies, the Patriarch—I want that they desire to know and unistand the will of God in the permance of their duty; and that, ough we entertain individual views n regard to various matters, we seemly come to a unity of faith in regard to all propositions which effect

he work of God here upon the earth.

NEW STAKES ORGANIZED. Another thing I will say, as it occurs omy mind. During the last two years the Stakes of Zion, possibly a greater rease proportionately in the number the Stakes than in the population. his has been an essential step, because arge that the Presidency of the Stakes could not possibly give that personal administration which the people needed. God moved upon His servant to livide these Stakes, and it has resulted a calling into activity a great body of sen and women, some of whom were comparatively inactive, and bey have manifested a marked degree interest and energy in the work Zion to organize; for they are extending and the west, to the north h; and after a while we will as it is called, and the Stakes of Zion, as it extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific,

GREATER DILIGENCE ENJOINED. But there is great need, in all the se who bear the responsibishopric, and other lead-in the Priesthood. Some been very neglectful of Others have manifested spacity to perform the duties of ive offices in the holy ified. It is not necessary obtain salvation in the when he becomes, through perform the duties of that it is no discredit for him give place to another it is a credit to him, and it. The same may be President of a Stake. President Lorenzo Snow and of Franklin D. Richards—two of it and most energetic men in one occasion went to sident Brigham Young and told him considered that they were in-incapable or inactive in their sponsible for the stewardship which their Apostleship be conferred upon other men. So great was their humility and their love for the stewardship which their gifts and capacities fitted them for. They should have all that they am glad they have imperfections: for I they were free from imperfections is would not be with them. They say misery likes company, and I am glad they have imperfections: for I they were free from imperfections in their gifts and capacities fitted them for. They should have all that they am glad they have imperfections: for I they were free from imperfections in their gifts and capacities fitted them for the stewardship which imperfections in the stewardship which is provided by the stewardship which imperfections in the stewardship which is provided by the stewardship which i

work of God that they offered to do this. In this, my brethren, there is great principle. Every man and woman hould esteem the work of God first and my heart that this was the work of the Lord. Though I have felt my own inefficiency to a marked extent inefficiency to a marked extent, I have always had the feeling. This is the work of God, and whether I stand or fall, whether I am worthy to maintain the your virtue; esteem it as dearer than the blood which flows in your veins: for God has placed a premium upon honor and chastity, and he or she who loses that gem loses something that responsibility that I bear or not, the work of God will be maintained just The work of God is not dependent upon us as individuals. It is His work, and He will maintain it

There is another thing I want to say to my brethren in connection with our labors and associations in the Priest-hood. We all have our individuality and our peculiar characteristics. It is perfectly right that it should be so; for God so designed it. He organized this earth, and He did it in such a way as to give variety. He placed thereon to give variety. He placed thereon the mountains, the valleys, the lakes, the rivers, the yeas, the vegetation and all the rest to beautify it and make it suitable for the abode of man. The Latter-day Saints have come from al-most all the civilized nations under the sun, and after awhile Japan and other parts of the Orient will yield forth Latter-day Saints; for God "will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. They will come, and I say, in the nam of the Lord, that no power under the sun can hinder it. No power can re-tard the work of God. It is the duty of the Latter-day Saints to understand his work, and to esteem the Spirit he Gospel as the best associate that

REFORMATION NEEDED. Now I want to say that the brethren do not always dwell together in peace. David said, "Behold, how good and low pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the pre clous cintment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's I know that some Bishopries do not labor as unitedly as they ought to do; and the reason is because they do not enjoy the spirit of their calling to the extent that they should, and that is the result of their not getting together and holding council meetings They do not bring themselves in sub ection to the will of the Holy Spiri and as a consequence there is differ and as a consequence there is difference among them. Now, when the presiding authorities of a ward or a Stake are disunited and they do not enjoy the Spirit of God in their calling, it will affect the entire ward or Stake. The result is, in some Stakes of Zion, we need a change and a reformation, to bring about a condition that is more in harmony with the progress of the work of God. In meeting the responsibility of the Priesthood that we bear we should not allow our personal objections to our brethren to inter-fere with our relationship to them in hood. I temember Brother Clawson stated here last conference that he had found one brother who did not pay his tithing because he had some personal antipathy to the Bishop. Another man did not pay his tithing because he had a personal objection to the President of the Stake. I want to say to you, my brethren, that this is all wrong. We are the servants of God. If God has entrusted a man with the responsibilities of the Priesthood, and that man from his boyhood up has honored that Priesthood, has been ready to go on missions abroad, willing to submit to the counsel of the Priesthood on all subjects, and on hand to perform the will of God in every direction, I say to you that notwithstanding the weak-nesses of such a man, he is a servant of God, whom God has honored, and there ought not to be anybody in his ward or in his Stake who would entertain such antipathy to him as to cause him refrain from performing the duties of his calling. At the same time every Rishop and every Stake President ought to put his arms around the people and make them feel that he is indeed their father. He should not rule with a rod of iron, nor with the determination to tiways have his own way; but he thould rule in the spirit of love and kindness for his brethren.

ONENESS OF SPIRIT NECESSARY.

I believe, my brethren and sisters, that there are but few men and women in this Church who cannot be saved and kept from departing from the per-formance of their duty, if they are properly taught and a spirit of love is manifested for them by the shepherds of the flock of Christ; but where there disunion and difference of opinion and where wrong influences have as-serted themselves through financial or political affairs, the effects are injurious. If we do not belong to the same political party, or if perchance we may ngage in a competitive business finan-cially, we ought not to let that divide us in spirit or place us at variance with our brethren. We cannot afford to do this, because men at times, though they may feel they have been wronged, i they are not careful they will be wrong hemselves by fighting against their the Son of God and who are appointed to preside as Bishops or Presidents, or as general authorities. I am reminded in this connection of a statement in this connection of a statement made to the Prophet Joseph Smith. As you know, in the early history of the Church they had become many difficulties. At one a great many difficulties. At one time they sought to establish Zion, in Jackson county. Offer Cowdery in Jackson county. Offer Cowdery and W. W. Phelps were placed in charge. I believe. The Lord revealed unto the Prophet Joseph Smith the principle of the United Order, and He thowed him how to establish this principle. But there was jealousy and envy among the brethren; there was a diswilliam to find fault one with another. The result was that the enemy came upon them and drove them from their inheritances; and the Lord uttered a decree that but few of those, if any, who were driven out should live to return. I do not know of scarcely any that are alive today of those who octhat are alive today of those with the coverage of the property of the country when that reversation was given. The Lord revealed to them how they should live. He said it was not pleasing to Him that one man that which was above. was not pleasing to Him that one man should possess that which was above another. He declared that the earth was full of His bountles, and He designed that all should have enough. He asked them to consecrate all that they had to the establishment and beautifying of Zion, and that every man and weman should be made responsible for the stewardship which their children in the ways of the Lord; but all the surplus should be consecrated for the redemption of Zlon. This was the principle revealed at that time, and we shall yet have to come to that. In this connection the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"Behold, thus saith the Lord your God unto you, O ye Elders of My Church hearken ye and hear, and receive My will concerning you;
"For verily I say unto you, I will that ye should overcome the world; wherefore I will have compassion upon

ADMONITION TO THE YOUNG. Let me say that this revelation and voice of warning is unto the Latter-day Saints today, and it is our duty to overcome the world. There is a constant effort being made to destroy our young people by the in-fluences and powers of darkness, and we should set our faces as flint against it. I want to raise my voice to the young people of the Latter-day Saints and ask them to attend their Sunday schools and their Improvement associations. I want to en-courage them to attend to their pravcourage them to attend to their brav-ers night and morning. I want to en-courage them to go on missions, both young men and young women, when the Lord shall so indicate, and lift up their voices in defense of the work of God. If they will do this and be obedi-ent to the counsel of the holy Priest-hood, they will protect them are the countries. hood, they will never turn aside fro the work of God. Young people, guard

cannot be restored in this life, if it car in the life to come. FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER.

The revelation continues: "There are those among you whe have sinned."

That is true today. There are thost among us who have sinned. There are those among us who have sat in coun cil with the ungodly, and who have sought to overturn the counsel of the holy Priesthood, and who have set themselves up as superior in judgment and wisdom to those who bear the Priesthood of the Son of God. In this they have sinned. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark! Wherefore, repent, and do so no more

"But verily I say, for this once, for mine own glory, and for the salvation of souls, I have forgiven you your sins. "I will be merciful unto you, for I have given unto you the kingdom; 'And the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom shall not be taken from my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., through the means I have appointed, while he liveth, inasmuch as he obeyeth mine

There are those who have sought occasion against him without cause My brethren, there are those who have sought occasion against the servants of God without cause. They have sought occasion against the man who has stood at the head of the Church, and whom God has said we should look upon as His representative upon the earth. He said concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Ye shall receive his words as if from mine own mouth;" and the same authority and power to lead the Church was conferred upon the Prophet Brigham Young. Taylor, and to President Wilford Wood-ruff, and now rests upon President Lornzo Snow, who holds the keys work of God at the present time. There are those who have sought occusion against him without cause. Now, it is not only the man who stands at the head, and his counselors, and the Twelve Apostles, the presiding Council who bear this great responsibility of representing God, but every man who bears the holy Priesthood is a representative of God; and in his sphere and calling it is understood that he shall have the mind and will of God to administer unto the people. The Bishop of a ward, the President of a Stake, the presiding Elder of a quorum, or a presiding council of Seventies, may en-joy the revelations of the Holy Ghos to guide them in the duties of the office. It is, therefore, not only or duty to avoid sinning against our broth ren who bear the Apostleship, but it is our duty to be exceedingly kind and charitable to and assist in upholding and sustaining every officer in the Church, whether he be the Bishop of a ward, the President of a Stake, or the holder of any other position in the Priesthood. We have no right to tea down his influence among the people of God. And we are not injured by refraining from it; for there is no man, from the head of the Church down to the last ordained Deacon, who will have power to lead the people of God astray or to work any permanent injury to the cause of Christ. There is authority and power in the Church to bring every to justice in the due time of th Lord, and it is not our business to fin fault and to tear down. The Lord is n respecter of persons, and when His Prophet sinned He told him of according to this revelation.

"Nevertheless he has sinned, but verily I say unto you, I., the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me and ask forgiveness,

who have not sinned unto death.

"My disciples, in days of old, sought occasion against one another, and forgave not one another in their hearts, and for this evil they were afflicted, and corely chastered." and sorely chastened.

Wherefore I say unto you, that ye aught to forgive one another, for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses, standeth condemned before Lord, for there remaineth in him the greater sin.
"I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will

forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men."

SACRIFICE FOR THE GOOD OF

OTHERS.

No Latter-day Saint has any right or title to the fellowship of the Spirit of God if he entertains an acrimoni-ous spirit against any living man or woman. God has sacrificed for our sal-vation. How often has President Snow told us that He required men to make sacrifices for the benefit of the whole people. He sacrificed His own beloved Son, that we might have redemption from the bonds of death, and also from our individual sins. He suffered His Son to die a most ignominious death, that the resurrection might be brought to pass. The Prophet Joseph Smith was raised up in this dispensation to stand at the head thereof, and be suffered all kinds of ignominy and scorn at the hands of men outside the Church, and treachery and perfidy at the hands of apostates inside the Church; and finally, commensurate with the important of the great message which he bore, h gave the last evidence that can be g ven by man upon earth to establish the divine authenticity of any principle-he gave his life. His blood was shed in Carthage jail. He was an innocent ma free from sin; for God had forgiven hi little trespasses and imperfectious. was a man of God, a pure, upright man a man that not only honored God, but se loved his fellow man and honor the nation that gave him birth. He lais it down by the revelations of the Holy Spirit that God founded this government by inspiration, which rested upon the patriotic fathers, who gave their blood to establish libwho gave their blood to establish lib-erty upon this land. Such was the Prophet Joseph Smith. But he was not a perfect being; he was not free from weakness; neither are we. I was go-ing to say, I thank God that my brethren are not; for if they were free from imperfections I would not be with them

ingly imperfect. When I see the standard of righteousness that belongs to the Gospel of the Son of God, I feel so immeasurably below it that I feel almost unworthy to be a member of the Church, to say nothing of being an Apostie of the Lord Jesus Christ. It Apostic of the Lord Jesus Christ. It scarcely ever enters my head that I am one, only I remember that I have been ordained, and I am constantly stirred up with a feeling that I must do my duty, I must declare this Gospel, or I will be damned; but the thought of being superior to any Elder, or Seventy, or Priest, Teacher, or Deacon, has never entered my heart; nor do I believe it enters the hearts of my brethern who bear the Apostleship, for they ren who bear the Apostleship, for they are humble men. They have not chosen themselves; God has chosen them by the voice of inspiration through the Prophet who stands at the head of the Church.

Remember, my brethren and sisters, these few verses that I have read from Section 64 of the Doctrine and Coven-ants. There is also another statement in it in connection with the authorities of the Church, and it will not only apply to a Bishop or to the presiding au-thority of any Stake in Zion, but also to the Apostleship and to every man who bears responsibility in the holy Priesthood. It says:

"And even the Bishop who judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships, shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead; "For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the

Lord shall be upon her, "And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

"And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall feur because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen."

WORLD AFRAID OF THE TRUTH.

Now I want to say a word in regard o the people of the world adopting the ordinances of the Gospel, alluded to this morning by Elder Reed Smoot. I believe I sat upon the stump of a tree in the State of Virginia and read a pro-phecy by President Joseph F. Smith that the day would come when the min-isters of sectarianism would teach the doctrines of this Church, and it would be a strong delusion among the people. The sects of the day, my brethren and sisters, have a greater knowledge respecting the strength and force of this work than they admit to the people. They keep the people of the world in the dark in regard to the truth, and they are afraid to open their doors and let the people come in and hear the truth enunciated by the servants of God. I recently visited every State in the Eastern States mission. President E. H. Snow took great pains to see that I had the opportunity of bearing my testimony in every State of his Mission, In a prominent little city of one State the Elders circulated handbills from house to house, and after it was done, he sectarian ministers visited from handbills, and asked the people not to go and hear us. I want to say that I am not afraid to hear the representatives of any denomination on earth, nor to give them the opportunity of pre-senting their views. But the adversary is at work. He has understood the work of God from the beginning. He sought to destroy the Proj - Joseph Smith in the very outset. 1 . - aght to destroy the very outset. I wight to destroy the Son of God when He was on earth; and when he could not do that he sought to tempt Him, promising Him that if He would worship him he would give Him all the kingdoms of this world. He also sought to tempt the Prophet Joseph Smith to use the Book of Mormon for financial gain; but God had given him commandment that he should not make merchandise of sacred things, and he did not yield to the tempter. When the ministers found that they could not overturn the work by their arguments, they incited the people to resort to mobocracy. The Saints were hounded from place to place. Apostle David Patten and others were slaughtered; and finally the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were cruelly assassinated in Carthage jall, sealing their testimony with their blood, and the Saints of God were driven to these mountain valleys. And now they have come to realize that it is useless to try to mob the work out of existence, and they cannot overturn it by fair and open combat from the Bible, so they are adopting the method of teaching the doctrines that we teach. Now, I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that there is no need of going

patronage. It is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord that we should do In conclusion, my brethren and sisters, I want to bear my testimony. I feel well in the work of God. I love President Lorenzo Snow; I love his rounselors, President Cannon and President Smith. I ask God to heal President Cannon and return him home in safety. I ask the Latter-day Saints to pray for him with the intensity of

outside of this Church for the healing of your sick by Christian Science or by

heal the sick and to accomplish the work which He has assigned unto us,

and that we will not fellowship these other institutions by giving them our



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their souls, and pray for others who are afflicted. I love my brethren of the Twelve Apostles, and our most vener able brother, President Brigham Young, who has spent his life in the ministry and who has been on hand for the work of God, whether to preach the Gospe or to shoulder his musket in defense of the people against the Indians, as had to be done in the early history of the Territory. I love the Seventies, the Bishopric, the Patriarch, and all my brethren and sisters. I am glad to ex-press this love and fellowship for you. pray for you night and morning, and Lask you to remember me in your faith and prayers. God will vindicate this work, and we must have faith in it. Out of Israel, says Isaiah, I will gather Israel. It is not everyone that will stand and be faithful. As Elder Clawson said this morning, of the ten virgins five were wise and five were foolish. Let us try and not be numbered among the foolish ones. Let every Bishop, when he returns home, endeavor to straighten up his ward; let every President of a Stake do likewise with his Stake; and the spirit of this conference into their families, that the power of God may be among the people, and that we may not be as trifling children, quarreling over fences, or over politics, or those things that canker the heart and destroy the fellowship of the brethren and sisters one for the other. Do not forget that this is the work of God, and not of man. God bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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