

the operations of the Spirit, yet all are by the same Spirit. Such also is this Priesthood; although there are many offices, to each of which different duties are assigned, yet it is but one Priesthood, each and all of its offices being necessary to a perfect system, as all the members are necessary to a perfect body.

The question which has been so often discussed as to which of certain offices in the Priesthood is the greatest, can only be answered by determining of which is demanded the greatest amount of labor; the most responsible duties to be performed.

If there is no unnecessary office, ordination, calling or duty, belonging to Priesthood, then who shall say that the office and duties of a Teacher are not as important as those of an Elder; or those of a Seventy equally as necessary as those of an High Priest, and each of these in his respective calling as important as those of an Apostle? The one is not without the other in God's great saving plan.

A careful consideration of the duties assigned to the several offices in the Church of Christ, would show how wisely they have been appropriated. In the Church was placed *first* Apostles. And why? Because it was made the duty of that office to be a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and open the door of the Kingdom by proclamation of the Gospel to all nations; to demand of all people everywhere, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins; to become members of the Church and Kingdom of God. This preaching of the Gospel, this calling to repentance, is the *first* labor to be performed in any and every dispensation of God to man, and it was infinitely proper that those who were commissioned to do this first work, should be placed officially, first in the Church; such is the office of an Apostle, and such, in part, the duties of his calling. The mere fact of an office being first in the performance of official duty, does not necessarily imply that it is the greatest. Its labor may precede the fullness of the Church organization, and prepare the way. Thus did John, the forerunner of Jesus; the one coming after being greater than the one that went before. The entire body is greater than any one member, and each member must answer to the body. There is no office in the Priesthood that is not accountable to others; even though it be that of the president of the High Priesthood.

The fact that there are three

Quorums in the Church whose decisions are equal when unanimous, implies a similarity of authority, and the possibility of like calling as existing with each; but the acts and authority of each can only be exercised in the absence of the higher, and in their order. In the absence of the first presidency of three, the next Quorum increased four-fold in number, being equal to,—may succeed the first. They always hold the right of presidency abroad as a traveling High Council, but never at home when there is a presidency of the High Priesthood there. It would next require seventy of their assistants to constitute a presidency, competent to decide in all matters that relate to the organization and spiritual welfare of the Church.

No one of these offices is alone in its authority; each of the others is co-ordinate with it. The standing High Councils at the Stakes of Zion, are quorums with like authority, in Church affairs of the Stake as the quorum of the First Presidency or the traveling High Council; subject to revision by the First Presidency with a council of twelve High Priests. This however, only in affairs that relate to the Church in its organized condition—not as relates to the preaching of the Gospel to the nations of the earth, which special ministry belongs to the Apostles, and the Seventies as their aids.

When those converted to the truth are organized, their organization constitutes government,—the Church and Kingdom of God. As it is written, "they who are faithful to the obtaining of these two Priesthoods become the Church, the Kingdom and the Elect of God." This government must be faithfully administered to effectuate the salvation of the people. This duty and labor in the economy of God has been laid upon High Priests, whose calling differs very essentially from those of the traveling High Council and Seventies. The child having been born again by the administrations of those authorized to open the door and admit it into the family circle, must now be committed to parental care—to presidential protection and guardianship, such as the presiding genius of the High Priesthood imparts to all its recipients.

These great and important duties belong to the High Priests,—such men as are here assembled this day. Their office and calling is to preside. Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors, the High Council of a

Stake; the Bishops of the Wards within the Stakes, and their Counselors, are all of the High Priests authority and calling; and as a body or quorum in the Stakes of Zion their duties may very appropriately come under consideration. It is of necessity that they must be performed.

As relates to the members of this quorum, the president of the Stake, or the president of a Ward has no higher Priesthood than the more retired members of the Quorum. Such presidents are simply placed in a position, by virtue of calling, where they can exercise the powers of Priesthood for those under their care. The humblest member of the Quorum is eligible to like high calling, and to the performance of like high duties, if occasion requires.

The question now arises, what are the duties to be performed by the presiding authority? The answer is, that it is no less than the complete salvation, temporally and spiritually, of the members of the family, Ward or Stake to which a president is assigned. The president of the Stake, by and with the aid of his assistants, must see that every Ward and every family under his jurisdiction is secured in its rights and liberties under the law of God and to this end the law must be enforced; must not be violated; neither must there be any neglect or failure to comply with its conditions. The duties of father to the family are to a great extent, the duties of president to the people. He must see that their spiritual wants are provided for, and if necessary open the heavens and obtain the knowledge essential to the people's welfare; and in the absence of law applicable to any condition that may arise, he must by application to the proper authority, provide for every possible emergency.

Every office or calling of Priesthood under his administration, of necessity, also has a president, who is held alike responsible to those over whom he presides; in which position he becomes an aid to the Priesthood of the Stake, as well as a guardian of the rights and interests of the people. This distribution of authority is necessary, that its virtue and power may reach every individual member of the Church, and the burden of labor be not required of only a few.

The legitimate results of the efficient exercise of this authority are such that there can be no iniquity in the Church; no evil speaking; no hardness of feeling; no back-biting; no unrighteousness of any kind to