

the face of the earth who have tested this principle as we have. It is a fact that has been demonstrated in our experience, that the men who strictly pay their tithing are the men who are the most prospered among us. The experience of many years has proved this; so that among those who have had experience there exists no doubt upon this subject. Therefore, I say we have verified the truth of the words of Malachi, where he says, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

We have proved the Lord also in many other directions. For instance, I have only to refer to our going out without purse and scrip and preaching the Gospel. We have tested the promises of God, and have proved them to be true. Thousands of miles have been traveled by the Elders of this Church in preaching the Gospel without purse and scrip, and they have proved that He is a God who heareth and answereth prayer, and who watches over His servants and His people, and who provides for their wants. In this way faith is being developed in the minds of those who obey these laws of God, and a people are being raised up in these mountains that have this faith—the faith that once existed in ancient days.

Respecting tithing and the Priesthood. It is true that in the days of Moses a single tribe was selected out of the tribes of Israel to bear the Priesthood of the Son of God. But it was the design of God to have made them all a kingdom of priests—a holy nation, if they had received His laws. They did not, however, and a lesser law was given to them—a law which Paul characterizes as a law of carnal commandments.

But in our day we live in a different dispensation. The tithing is not for the use of a class or a tribe; and the Priesthood is not confined to a tribe. The Lord has promised unto His people in these days that they should be a kingdom of kings and priests; and among the Latter-day Saints almost every man who is considered worthy of a standing in the Church has received the Priesthood. It is not the First Presidency alone, not the Twelve, not the High Priests, not the Seventies and the Elders alone who have received the Priesthood; but almost every male member of this Church who has reached the years of accountability and is faithful, bears some portion of the Priesthood. There is no tribe, therefore, nor any class among the Latter-day Saints, that has been selected to bear the Priesthood and to be sustained out of the tithings. It is true that God has designed that the tithings shall be used, among other things, for the support of the Priesthood. But I should deplore the day when the Priesthood of the Son of God would depend upon the tithings of this people for their support. It would be something that I should dread. I always admired the policy of President Young in this respect. During his lifetime he never would allow any man to draw a fixed amount from the tithing for his support; but he allowed the tithing to be administered, under the direction of himself and counselors, to the brethren as they might need; so that no thought should enter into the minds of a certain class that because they held official position in the Church

they would therefore have a right to live upon the tithings of the Church.

It is incumbent upon all who hold the Priesthood or any portion of it, to labor freely in the offices to which they are ordained. Even Deacons, Teachers and Priests do this in all the wards and branches of the Church. The Priests and the Teachers, when they magnify their callings, consume considerable time in visiting the families of the Saints; they do this at what many would call much personal sacrifice and without pecuniary compensation. A portion of the time of many other officers in the Church is devoted, without pay in money, in the same way for the public benefit. The practice has been universal, from the organization of the Church, that these labors should be rendered to the Church without money or without price. This has been the obligation that every right minded officer in the Church has felt to be resting upon him. These labors have been works of love to him; and to the credit of those who bear the Priesthood it can be said that they have been performed with alacrity and zeal.

But suppose a portion of the Elders of the Church were to receive a salary, or a fixed amount for their services, can you not see the effect this would have upon other officers? Would they not feel that they, too, should receive compensation in some form for the portion of time which they spend in performing the duties of their offices? And thus by degrees a system of things would be introduced into and prevail in the Church which would be in opposition to all past practices and teachings and reduce us to the level of the man-made systems which prevail in the world. Let any one be with the First Presidency in their daily duties and he will notice how this tendency has to be constantly checked. Indeed, it is not necessary, perhaps, for one to be with us to perceive this inclination, for if he be a careful observer, he is aware of its existence.

I always have admired the position that Alma occupied in his labors in the ministry among the Nephites. I will read what he said upon one occasion, when he was charged by a man named Korihor with taking advantage of his position as the High Priest and President of the Church of Christ in that day:

And he [Korihor] did rise up in great swelling words before Alma, and did revile against the priests and teachers, accusing them of leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers, for the sake of glutting in the labors of the people.

Now Alma said unto him, Thou knowest that we do not glut ourselves upon the labors of this people; for behold I have labored even from the commencement of the reign of the Judges, until now, with mine own hands, for my support, notwithstanding my many travels round about the land to declare the word of God unto my people.

And notwithstanding the many labors which I have performed in the Church, I have never received so much as even one senine for my labor; neither has any of my brethren, save it were in the judgment-seat, and then we have received only according to law for our time.

And now if we do not receive anything for our labors in the church, what doth it profit us to labor in the church, save it were to declare the truth, that we may have rejoicings in the joy of our brethren?

Then why sayest thou that we preach unto this people to get gain, when thou, of thyself knowest that we receive no gain?

It was a very general practice in the Church of Christ on this hemisphere

in those days for those who bore the Priesthood to do as Alma did. And it has been the course taken in these days, to a very great extent, among the Elders of this Church. Those who have labored as Presidents, and Bishops, and Apostles and others, have done so for years and have supported themselves by the labor of their hands. They have not been a burden to this people, and they have not lived upon the tithing of this people. It has been the ambition of numbers of men in this Church to bestow their labors in the Church entirely free, and then pay their tithing as well, so that they might not be a burden to the Latter-day Saints, and that they might not be accused of living off the tithings of the people.

This is a principle that should be cherished among us. We should seek to become independent in this respect. We should rely upon the promises of God that He will sustain His people, and He will sustain His servants. It is better for them to be poor and labor in the ministry, as many hundreds have done, for the good of the people, living by their own industry, than for any to imagine that they can live entirely off the tithings of the people, and a class thereby grow up that will be supported in this manner. I know it is not of God that this should be. At the same time the principle of tithing and offerings that our beloved brother has spoken upon is correct. But I want a distinction to be created in the minds of the Latter-day Saints upon this principle, that while tithing is, among other things, for the purpose of helping to support the Priesthood, it is not for the Priesthood to depend upon the tithing for their support. It would be a wrong condition of things if that were to prevail in the Church.

The Lord is determined to have a Priesthood that will not be a salaried Priesthood. Because a man gets an office in the Church—for instance, one of the Seven Presidents of Seventies, or an Apostle—he should not imagine that immediately he is ordained to that office he will have a fixed salary, or that he can depend upon the tithing for his support, or because he is a Bishop, that he will think, "well, this office of Bishop has a fixed salary, and I will depend upon that to sustain me." This would reduce the Priesthood to the level of political office. It is not the design of God that such a condition should exist in His Church. When men are ordained to office in the Priesthood they should seek to honor the office, regardless of pay. If the idea of the emoluments which might be attached to an office were in their minds, they would show themselves unworthy of the office. But when men are devoted to the work of the ministry and their whole time is occupied, and they are likely to need assistance, shall they not be helped? Certainly, for the Lord has given authority for the tithing to be used in such cases—to that extent and no more; not for a fixed amount to be attached to an office, but for help to be rendered according to the needs of the individual. Thus if Elders are in want, help them; but if they can sustain themselves, let them do it by their own labor—and then pay their tithing just as other folks do. That is the true law of the Lord in regard to this people.

We are taught differently from other