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## REMARKS

Made at the Salt Lake Stake Conference, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City. Sunday afternoon, March 13th, 1898, by

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There is but a little time left for me to occupy, but I hope to speak under the same good Spirit which has prevailed while we have been listening to the remarks of Elder Grant. We are all pleased to see him and to hear his voice again in public, and I hope he will be spared many years yet to preach the Gospel of the kingdom and to bear testimony to the truths that he has briefly touched upon this afternoon.

In listening to testimonies like that which we have heard, persons who are not familiar with what God has done in the earth in the last days, and the reasons for it, are likely to ask the questions: "What need was there for John the Baptist to come and restore the authority which he had? Why did Peter, James and John come to earth to ordain men to the authority which they held? And what necessity was there for the Book of Mormon to be introduced to the people of this generation, seeing that they have the Bible? There are a great many Christian ministers, churches almost without number, and hosts of good people who believe in God the Father and in Jesus Christ and who are trying to lead devoted, holy lives. Then what need is there for all this? Why should there be a new revelation? Have we not sufficient in the scriptures—the Old and the New Testaments? And have we not plenty of preachers, and plenty of religion already?"

These are questions that arise in people's minds when they hear Latter-day Saints speak of the restoration of the Gospel and of the authority of the Holy Priesthood. For a few moments let us consider these questions. It is perfectly true that we have the Bible. What is it? It is a collection of books, said to have been written by men inspired of God. The original manuscripts, however, are not to be found; and the books that we have in the collection called the Bible refer to a great many other things that were given of God to Prophets of old which we do not find included in that book. There are also portions of it that are simply historical. Yet it is generally held by people in what is called "the Christian world" to be inspired of God from Genesis to Revelation; that every word of it is the word of God, and that people are bound to be guided by it. Now when we look around us in the Christian world, we find the people who profess to believe this divided among themselves in regard to the meaning of the book. They have not come to the unity of the faith. The book does not bring people to a unity of understanding. Therefore we have all these different religious sects, each one claiming to be right; perhaps not all of them declaring that the others are wrong, but they are not logical unless they do, for truth is never

divided against itself, and one truth never contradicts another. But we have all these different religious denominations, and we have men in them who are preachers. When we ask them where they obtained the authority to preach and to administer (for they administer ordinances) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, most of them will point to the last chapter of Mark or the last chapter of Matthew, where we read that Jesus gave instructions to eleven men—His Apostles. There were twelve, but one of them fell by the wayside. Judas betrayed his Master, and was not afterwards numbered among the Apostles. Jesus said to these eleven men, whom He had called, whom He had ordained, upon whom he had bestowed the same authority as the Father had given to Him:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This commission, this power and this authority were bestowed solely upon these eleven men; and yet ministers of modern times will point to this scripture as the source of their authority to administer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Suppose a man ministering now as an ambassador from a foreign nation, when asked for his authority, should point to an old commission possessed by some man who lived two thousand years ago, what would you think of him? Why, you would think him a fit subject for a commission on insanity. Or if a man were to attempt to administer as justice of the peace, or a judge, upon any such commission as that, he would very likely find his way into prison, if not into a lunatic asylum. But in these times, when you ask preachers where they obtain their authority to administer in sacred things, they point to the scriptures. Some, however, will say, I am called of God. How? Why, I feel called in my soul. Is that the way God called men in former times? Not according to the Bible, which they point to as the word of God. When men of old were called to administer in the name of the Lord, they were called by revelation from God, either direct to the individual or through some person or persons who were authorized to act for Deity. And the men who held that authority could not call men indiscriminately; they had to be led and guided by the Holy Ghost or by the voice of God. Take, for instance, the ordination of Saul of Tarsus, afterwards called Paul the Apostle. Those of you who are familiar with his history in the New Testament know that he was very active in persecuting the Saints of those times. On his way to Damascus to obtain letters whereby he could be instrumental in persecuting more severely the people of God, called Saints (they were not called Christians

then, but Saints; they were first called Christians at Antioch by way of a nickname). Jesus appeared to him. He was an honest man. What he did he did sincerely. He thought he was doing God service when he went to persecute the Saints. But Christ met him on the way. His light shone forth, and the glory was so brilliant that Saul was stricken blind. Jesus asked him why he persecuted Him. Saul was carried blind into Damascus. In giving an account of this, Saul says:

"And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, 'Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up on him.

"And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth.

"For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

"And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts xxii, 12—16).

Now, one would suppose, particularly a modern Christian, that Saul was then and there authorized to go out and administer in the name of the Lord and bear this witness. He had seen Christ, he had heard the voice of His mouth; a servant of God had come to him and predicted what he should do; he had been healed by miracle. Was he not then qualified? No. You will find by reading the 13th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that after all this had passed by for some time, as certain prophets and teachers ministered before the Lord, the Holy Ghost said unto them:

"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

That is how the Apostle Paul received his authority. Writing to the Hebrews, he says:

"And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Heb. v, 4.

If you will turn back to the Old Testament, you will find that Aaron was called by revelation of God through Moses.

That is God's way. The other way is man's way. This authority cannot be received from man. It must come from God.

"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.

"As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek." Verses 5, 6.

As God called Christ, so Christ called His Apostles, and gave them similar authority and power, and sent them out. But that does not give anybody