

the length and breadth of Zion, and everybody is brought within their compass. These ward organizations have become quite perfect. How has this been done? Has it been done by written revelation to the Church? Has it been done by anything that is recorded in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants? No; there is scarcely anything in that book that gives any clear idea of the ward organizations that at present exist. How have they been organized? By the spirit of revelation in and through the man whom God chose to hold the keys. And so there are constantly arising reasons why there should be revelation from God. Does it come? Certainly it comes, and at the time it is needed. In this way the organization of the Church is kept perfect; and it will continue to be so until Christ comes. The books would not do it; the knowledge in the books would not do it. It is not designed that they should. Changes are necessary from time to time, and it requires supreme and divine wisdom to make these changes in accordance with the plans of Jehovah. Therefore, there is in the Church this spirit and gift of revelation. God gives to every man according to his office and calling. It is not given to one man alone, (only so far as the guidance and control of the Church is concerned); but every man that has the Priesthood, from the President of the Church down to the Deacon in his office and calling, has the right to revelation, and also has the spirit of revelation if he is living as he should do. You Elders who have had experience in the missionary field and at home, how often has it been the case that you have received knowledge for yourselves from God and you have been guided by Him in relation to the organization of branches of the Church and the men to select for the various offices that were to be filled? You have received this just as much in your sphere as the President of the Church has in his sphere. Men go out and baptize people, and after awhile they get a sufficient number to form a branch of the Church. Now, if they are living as they should do, they have the spirit of revelation resting upon them, and they know what to do; they know whom to select as the president of the branch, and whom to ordain as Elders, as Priests as Teachers, or as Deacons. The Spirit of God reveals this unto them, and by its revelations they are guided in organizing the branches of the Church. There is no man that ever went out as a minister of the Lord Jesus that ever lacked anything in his ministry, if he lived for it, whether he went out as a traveling Elder or as a president.

Now, there are many men who go around at one time and another, pretending to have revelation, and pretending that power is lacking in the midst of the Saints. Let me say to you—and I say it in the presence of the Great Eternal, before whom we shall all have to appear to answer for the deeds done in the body—that God has bestowed upon the First Presidency of this Church and upon the Apostles everything necessary to guide this people and to lead them back into the presence of God. I know that as I know that I live, and it is my testimony in your hearing today. There is no key, there is no authority, there is no revelation, there is no prophecy, there is

nothing lacking. And though these men are earthen vessels, weak and fallible, yet God is with them, for He has chosen them. He has a right to choose whom He pleases, and when He chooses men He will sustain them and He will carry them off victorious over everything that may oppose, if they will only do His will. I want to say that to you all. God has not left His Church; He has not deserted it. There has been no interregnum during which the authority of the Priesthood has not been exercised, from the days of Joseph until this present hour. The work of God as we see it is a testimony of this. The prosperity that has attended it, the blessing of God that has rested upon those who have listened to the counsel of God's servants, is an evidence of it. Can any man stand up today and say, "I have obeyed counsel and I have been cursed in doing it?" There is not a man that can truthfully say that. But all who bear testimony on this point will say, "I have been blessed in obeying counsel. When I have followed the counsel of God's servants whom He has placed to preside over His Church, blessing has attended me and my house." And let me say to you, my brethren and sisters, we are living at a time when God will hold us to a strict accountability for that which He teaches us. Some people think they can treat lightly the counsels that are given. Do not allow yourselves to be deceived by the adversary. Do not allow your minds to be darkened and the feeling to creep in that this is a matter of small importance. For I tell you the consequences may be most grave, not only to us individually, but to our children after us. God is doing a great work in the earth, and He has chosen us to be His people. He has placed His name upon us, and He has given unto us all the evidences that we can ask concerning it being His work. He has not left us to grope in the dark; but He has borne constant and unceasing testimony to us that this is His work. God has placed this Priesthood in His Church for the express purpose of teaching the Church, and the Church should listen to the teachings of the servants of God. They should give heed to those teachings strictly, and if they do not they incur a grave responsibility. The counsels of the servants of God may not be written; nevertheless they are binding; and there will be a day come, a solemn day for all mankind, and one which we ought to think about occasionally, when everyone will have to answer for the deeds done in the body. We will have to stand at the bar of the Great Judge to be judged. All the writings of the men of God testify to this fact. And if we have disobeyed the Lord, and if we have not listened to His counsels, those who gave those counsels will stand as swift witnesses against this generation. Of course, it is the privilege of all the members of this Church to obtain from day to day the forgiveness of our sins, so that they will be blotted out and not appear against us; and no Latter-day Saint should allow one day to pass with his sins unforgiven. If we have done wrong, we should repent of that wrong. If it be a wrong done to God, we should obtain forgiveness from God, by confession and heartfelt repentance. If it be a wrong done to men, we should confess that wrong and make it right, and thus obtain forgiveness. We should live this

way every day. Every man should live in harmony with his family—with his wife and children. There should be perfect harmony and love existing in the midst of the family. Then this should be extended throughout the Church, every household living in harmony with every other household, and the whole Church living in this way, with their sins forgiven. What a blessed condition to be in! No sins held against us by our brethren and sisters! If we live in this manner we shall not dread the judgment, we shall not be afraid to meet the face of our Great Judge. But if we have been disobedient and rebellious; if we have continually set at naught the counsels that He has given to us, those counsels and those who gave them will stand as witnesses against us, and condemnation will follow. It is said that the saints shall judge the world, and the Elders of this Church will be as judges in that sense. We who have carried the Gospel to the nations, who have lifted up our voices in solemn warning to the people concerning the judgments that were about to come, and have cried repentance unto them, we shall stand as their judges and as witnesses against them, and by our testimony they will be either approved or condemned. To me this is a solemn thought.

These Latter-day Saints are receiving constantly the outpouring of the Spirit of God and the teachings of the Elders. Of course, we have not all the particulars of the labors of the men of God in the various dispensations; but I have questioned very much whether there ever was a generation that lived upon the earth that had the amount of teaching and persuasion and every kind of inducement held out to them to serve God and to be true and faithful to their covenants as have these Latter-day Saints. It has been, so to speak, a constant stream flowing from God through His servants, who have risen early and labored late and have worn themselves out in teaching the people, telling them the counsels of God, and giving unto them the word of God in the greatest simplicity and plainness. Think of the labors of President Young, and of the Prophet Joseph Smith before him. After we came to these mountains, President Young and the brethren with him traveled constantly and labored incessantly, to benefit and to save the people. What will be the effect if these counsels that have been given in such profusion are rejected? The consequences will be most serious to those who reject them. Already we see the operation of the judgments of God in this respect. Many men whom I knew in boyhood in the Church have gone into oblivion. Whole families have disappeared, and their names are no longer numbered among the saints of God. Instead of having a posterity that shall be numbered with the righteous, their children are unknown among us. What a dreadful fate! Why is this? The cause is easily ascertained. It is because they have not listened to the counsels which God has given; they have rejected His word, they have departed from the path of righteousness, and they no longer are numbered with the saints of God, and they and their children will perish. And it will be so with us, my brethren and sisters, if we do not keep the commandments of God; for God has prophesied through His servants that there shall be great calamities and great destructions among the children of men. I say we