

Order, which, as you know, the people could not abide; and when we come to think about it, it could hardly be expected that they could do so, they having been in the Church but a short time, taken out of the world, with all the prejudices and weaknesses that you and I have. But the time will come when we will obey these things as they are given by the revelations of God, and it will not be a hardship either; it will be a pleasure to those who are under the influence of the Lord. But like all other things, it will be "free will and free grace."

Now, then, we come to this. Here is a command given; who to? Not to outsiders, not to men of the world, not to people who do not believe in God nor in His laws; but it is given directly to us who profess to have faith in Him, in His laws, and in His Priesthood. The question then is, what is our duty, as we have not obeyed the other law? I will remark here, incidentally, that when this law of tithing was given, a great many people were gathering up to Far West and to that district of country, as we are to this country; but it would apply more to our early settlements than at the present time. This people thus gathering to Far West were told that it was required of them to give their surplus property—I will read it.

"I require all their surplus property to be put into the hands of the Bishop of my Church of Zion, for the building of mine house, and for the laying the foundation of Zion, and for the priesthood, and for the debts of the Presidency of my Church; and this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people." What then? "And those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually, and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord."

Now, here is a people, of whom we form a part, who met together to ask the Prophet of the Lord to inquire for them the will of the Lord concerning this matter of tithing; and He gives it in these words: "And this shall be a standing law unto them forever."

I will ask, has the Lord ever annulled this? No. Then it stands in full force to-day to this people. Then again:

"Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass, that all those who gather unto the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus properties, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you."

That is very plain talk. Is there any compulsion about it? No; but if they do not do it they shall not be considered worthy to abide among you. What are we to make of it? As I said yesterday, I did not make it; President Young did not make it, neither did Joseph Smith make it; but by the request of the people he asked the Lord what His will was, and this was the answer; and this was given in 1838. And does it not seem strange that we do not comprehend it? I think it does sometimes. Here we have had the Doctrine and Covenants in our hands, which contain this revelation, since the year 1835; that is nearly forty-two years ago. We have had forty-two years to study this doctrine, and it is as plain as you can make it, and yet it would seem that we cannot understand it. Do we want to understand the laws of God? If we do and will read these things under the influence of that spirit that I have referred to, I think that we will understand our duties without much trouble.

Then, regarding Zion—we were talking about building up Zion—I am not going to enter into the whys and wherefores of these things, but will say it is a test to the people of God, or for us who profess to be, that we may know whether people will observe a certain specific law given by the Almighty or not, and thus have a proof of their fidelity and obedience. Now, if we abide this, all well and good; if not, it is written, "They shall not be found worthy to abide among you." What will you do with them? I often think that there are a great many people who are not worthy to abide among us; don't you? And then if God were to put judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, most of us would be in a very poor fix. I will tell you what I think should be done, and that is why I am treating upon this subject to-day. I think the people ought to be instructed in these things, and then if they do not live up to them you will not then be held responsible to the authorities that preside over you. The Lord tells us that they

shall not be worthy of a place among us. Do we want to alter that? Not one iota. Would I wish to be harsh to men that are ignorant? No. I would not; I would bear with them, and teach them and instruct them. And if I were a Bishop I should instruct my Teachers to do it; and then by and by, after they were fully informed, and had every opportunity to become acquainted with things, we might take final action in relation to their standing. I would not wish to enforce that law at present, until men were thoroughly informed. Take for instance the case I referred to yesterday. There were two men; one paid \$100 in tithing, the other paid \$25 in tithing. Both of them owned about the same amount of property; but the first paid his tithing, the other did not. The second, however, paid some \$75 in donations; but he did not pay his tithing, he only paid a quarter of it. That now may have arisen from ignorance with regard to the law. The last paid out as much money as the first; and he may have been wrongly taught. Some of the Bishops do not understand these things, and yet we have had this doctrine given unto us for forty-two years. Has a man a right to turn and change things as he pleases? I have not, and I do not believe any other man has. And if any Bishop or a President of a Stake or anybody else tells you that you can do as you please about the disposition you make of the means you pay, as long as you pay a certain amount, or you may pay it on tithing or not, as you please, I tell you that he teaches false doctrine. But should we be hard with such people? No. If they have been under influences of this nature and been wrongly taught, I will say, as a certain party said to me who had been doing these things, "I will switch off and pay my tithing according to the law." You, Bishops and Presidents of Stakes, switch off and get the people to do things right. There is no commandment about donations, but there is about tithing; and I am not at liberty to change this, neither any other man.

I will follow this subject a little further. We are talking about building up Zion. Here is where the thing applies itself with great force to me as well as to you, when you comprehend it as it exists and see it

by the light of the Spirit of Truth. For it is written: "And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you." Well, we are talking about building up the land of Zion, which is one of the things we are here for. And God has said that if we do not obey this law, it shall not be a land of Zion unto us. Does this apply to us? I will read a little further: "And this shall be an ensample unto all the Stakes of Zion." Now, I speak these things for your information. I will go a little farther upon the subject. A person wrote me a letter, stating that a young man had applied to a certain Bishop for a recommendation to get married. He asked him if he had paid his tithing. He answered, No. "Well," said the Bishop, "We are instructed not to give recommends to those who do not pay their tithing." "But," said the young man, my father I suppose paid my tithing for me." If this was so, that would be very proper, especially in farming districts, where the grown sons assist in cultivating the farm, and the daughters, perhaps, assist in making the butter and cheese, etc. When the tithing on the whole is paid, that is all straight enough, because what is made is the proceeds of the united labor of the family, and the family are all, of course, represented until they come to age. And then what? Why then comes another state of things. "Have you paid your tithing since you left your father?" the young man was asked. No. Why? I have been careless and indifferent and I have not done what was right. Well, if you haven't paid your tithing, and you seem to have forgotten God, why is it that you want to get married according to the laws of God? Why not get married in some other way, seeing that you observe not the laws of God? Well, in the first place, my father and mother wish me to be married according to the laws of God; and then my intended wife's father and mother want us to be married in that way; and again, the girl has told me that she will not have me unless we get married in that way.

I will here remark, I think this very sensible and creditable on the part of the young lady; I think she acted very wisely, and I wish all our young sisters felt the same, and they ought to on a matter of such importance to them. Says the young man further: "I have a desire to keep the laws of God, for I was born in the Church, and I have grown up with such feelings, but I was not man enough to practice them. But if you give me the recommendation I will try and do it in the future." But the question is, under these circumstances, should the recommendation be given? I could not do it, unless there was some visible manifestation on his part to mend his ways and to make up the thing he had been deficient in. "Why," it may be asked, "is it not better to have our sons married in the right way and be kind to them, than to see them go elsewhere to be married?" As I said yesterday, so I say to-day, if it were a son of mine I could not give him the recommendation; and other men's sons under the same circumstances are no better than mine. It is principle we are to be governed by. I am not here, you are not here, to carry out our own designs, and feelings, and purposes. Why, Jesus himself did not come to do that. According to His own words, He came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him. And we are here not to do our own will, but the will of the Father who also sent us, and who has called us to our holy and exalted calling. And what shall be done? Unless this young man could convince me, if I were a Bishop, that he was sincere in his heart and made some satisfactory attempt at fulfilling this law I would not give him a recommendation. What? Would Elders of Israel take men into the House of God, would you, because God has revealed some of the greatest blessings that can be conferred upon humanity, blessings which thousands and tens of thousands of good men sang about and prayed about and longed to receive, but who died without enjoying them, should we take a man, a man whom this Book says, shall not be worthy to abide amongst you, should we, I say, take him through the House of the Lord and confer and seal upon him blessings even lives eternal, and thrones and principalities and powers and

dominions, and introduce him into the society of the highest intelligences that exist in the eternal worlds? I say no! A thousand times no!! I forbid you to do it in the name of the Lord. We cannot do it, we are not at liberty to do it, neither are we at liberty to use our judgment in regard to it. If we bear with men in their weakness and infirmity and are obliged to carry a lot of men like so many automats, the time will come and it must come when they will be shut out, they will not be found worthy to abide among you; they are not worthy now. But we have to bear with them until they are better informed; but until then they must do the best they can, for they cannot go into the House of the Lord, they cannot be sealed up to eternal lives, they cannot have part in the blessings which God has conferred upon us until they bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

I will take it in another point of view. We pay our tithing and we pay Temple donations, we attend to the duties of the House of the Lord; we go forth and proclaim the gospel of peace to the nations of the earth; we convert people, under the blessing of God, and they come to a knowledge of the principles of the gospel, and we continue our labors to build up Zion; looking at it in this light, would it be just, after we have laid out our means, would it be in accordance with the principles of equity to grant this privilege to such men, a privilege which we have earned and, in a certain sense, paid for? It is generally the case that they are the first to rush forward and want certain blessings without earning them. Jesus said in His day that the "kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." These are some of that class who crowd in where they are not worthy to tread. These temporal matters they assume are of very little importance, they are of very little importance judging from the way that many of us labor; but they are of very great importance when weighed in the balances of truth, the principles of eternal life which God has revealed are of the utmost importance to the Saints, both to the living and the dead, to the myriads of men that have lived and that may live, these things are of vast importance.

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