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## THE RIGHTS OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

*Discourse delivered at the Utah Stake Conference, Provo, Sunday Afternoon, January 14, 1894, by*

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I am pleased to meet with so many of the Saints of God. I have listened to the remarks that have been made at this conference upon the Priesthood, and have been very much interested and edified. I do not know of any subject in the Church of more importance to the inhabitants of the earth and to ourselves than the Holy Priesthood. In listening to Brother F. M. Lyman's remarks concerning the Lesser Priesthood I had many thoughts and reflections. Some of them I feel to express to the Latter-day Saints. There is one principle connected with the Priesthood that I want all Israel to understand, and that is this: it makes no difference what portion of the Priesthood a man holds, if he holds any at all, he has rights. Whether he be a Deacon or whether he be an Apostle, the Priesthood held by him has rights, on earth and in the heavens. In this connection let me read a paragraph or two from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants:

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

That the rights of the Priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

That is the principle that we should understand. Sixty years ago, the 30th of last December, I heard the first sermon I ever heard in this Church. The next day I was baptized. There were very few branches of the Church in the country at that time. I was ordained a Teacher. My mission immediately commenced. I traveled the next spring a thousand miles with the Prophet Joseph in Zion's Camp. I went through that whole mission as a Teacher. Arrived in Missouri, several of us stopped at Lyman Wight's, where we held a Teachers' meeting. I remained in that office until at the conference I was ordained a Priest. I never was ordained a Deacon. I was sorry I was not; for I had a great desire to fill that office. However, I was not blessed with it. After I was ordained a Priest I was sent by the father of Brother Partridge here on a mission to the southern country.

That was in the fall of 1834. I had a companion with me, and we started out without purse and scrip. I traveled alone a good many miles and preached the Gospel, and I baptized a number that I could not confirm in the Church, because I was only a Priest. The first time I ever met with Brother A. O. Smoot, was upon that mission. I traveled some time preaching the Gospel before I was ordained an Elder. I was ordained an Elder under the hands of Warren Parrish. Afterwards, by order of the Prophet Joseph, I was ordained a Seventy by David Patten, who was martyred in Missouri for the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ. In 1837—the same year that Brother Kimball went to England and opened the mission there—I got permission from the Presidency in Kirtland to go to Fox Islands, being impressed by the Spirit to go there. While I was there I was called by revelation, with several others, to fill the places of those who were fallen of the Twelve Apostles. I have been some fifty-four years a member of the Twelve Apostles. I have traveled with that and other quorums now for sixty years; and I want to say to this assembly that I was just as much sustained by the power of God while holding the office of a Teacher, and especially while officiating in the vineyard as a Priest, as I ever was as an Apostle. There is no difference in this so long as we do our duty.

When a man holding any portion of that Priesthood goes before God, the heavens are bound to hear him, if he magnifies his Priesthood; and certainly it is our duty to go before the Lord and ask Him for what we want, and when we do that in faith, God hears and answers us. God has heard the prayers of the men who have borne the Priesthood from the day that Joseph Smith received the plates from the hands of Moroni, and He has fulfilled the prophecies contained in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. The Church has never fallen, notwithstanding her afflictions, her persecutions, her drivings, and her martyrdoms; but God has sustained it. When the Lord bestows gifts upon the children of men in connection with the Priesthood, those who receive those gifts are responsible for the use they make of them. We are responsible for the use we make of the Holy Priesthood which has been placed upon us. Whatever is necessary for us to receive and enjoy, it is our duty to ask the Lord for. We should go before Him in secret places and make our wants known, that our prayers may be heard and answered upon our heads. Herein lies our strength. Our trust is in God, and not in man. He has committed this work into the hands of His

Son Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, and this mission has been upon Him from the days of father Adam. He was appointed as the great sacrifice from before the foundation of the world. He came in the meridian of time and died for the redemption of man. We are engaged in the last dispensation. We are called upon to build up this Church and this Zion. And we can only do it by the power of the Holy Priesthood. No man has authority from God to administer to the children of men the ordinances of life and salvation only by the power of the Holy Priesthood. The power of that Priesthood is with the Latter-day Saints. When our brethren go out to the world—I do not care whether they are Priests, or Elders, or Seventies, or Apostles—and they offer to the Gentiles the Gospel of Christ, the power of God is with them, as long as they magnify their calling. That power bears record to every honest man and woman concerning the truth of the message which these men bear. By that power men and women have been pricked in their hearts and the Spirit of God has borne testimony to them. You have found this to be true; so have I. Without this power of the Priesthood, these effects cannot be manifested to men in the flesh. I hope that all Israel will understand this principle. You have not got to wait till you are an Elder, or a High Priest, or an Apostle, before God can hear your prayers. I know the Lord preserved my life when I held the office of a Priest. In one instance a man who sought my life, without any action on my part fell dead at my feet, as though he was struck with a thunderbolt from heaven, and I attended his funeral the next day. I had many blessings as a Priest, and had the spirit and power of God in that office.

Every man in every office ought to magnify his Priesthood. The Deacon ought to do so. I was very much pleased once in seeing a number of Deacons magnify their calling, down here at Nephi. They went through the city and chopped every piece of wood which every widow in that town had. Brother Geo. Teasdale, the President of the Stake, had three or four cords of cedar wood in his lot, and he went home one night and found that it had disappeared. He wondered what was the matter; but when he came to look around he found it all chopped up in his wood-house. They magnified their calling splendidly there.

Today we are, in some respects, in peculiar circumstances. We should trust in the Lord and do what is right. I know the Priesthood is given for the salvation of men and for the administration of ordinances both for the living