

will be called to account and held guilty of taking the name of the Lord in vain. How did the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ get the authority to baptize? Christ gave it to them. How did Christ get the authority? Did he assume it himself? No. Jesus said, "I come not to do my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." It was his Father in Heaven who called him to be a High Priest after the order of Melchisedek, and Moses and Elias who had previously held that priesthood, administered to him in the mount. Thus Christ received that holy priesthood, after the order of Melchisedek, which embraced all the higher powers and comprehended the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood (for the greater includes the less), and he ordained his Apostles to that priesthood. "As my Father hath sent me," said he, "even so send I you." They obtained their ordination from Christ, and therefore had a right to baptize and also to call others as the Holy Ghost directed.

"But," says one, "there are many people who have felt called in their hearts, they have had the spirit of the gospel. Have they not a right, seeing they believe in Christ, to administer in these ordinances?" Certainly not, not a particle of right. Let us look at Paul and his history, as related by himself, Saul, of Tarsus, who went to persecute the Saints and was smitten to the earth by the light from the glorious presence of the lately risen Jesus. He was led blind into the city where he expected to get letters to be used in the persecution and annoyance of the Saints. Says Paul: "And one Ananias came unto me and said, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon 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." Saul attended to the ordinance and was baptized. "Well, now," says one, "surely Saul had a right to preach the gospel. He had seen Jesus and heard his voice. A miracle had been wrought upon him and he was told that he should be a witness unto all men." No, he had not yet the right. The hands of the servants of the Lord had not yet been laid upon him. But we read in the XIII chapter of Acts, that while certain prophets and teachers were waiting before the Lord, "the Holy Ghost said, 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." It is written, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron was called by Moses, who received divine authority by direct communication from God. Aaron, it appears, could talk better than Moses, but Moses was the man called to hold the keys of the ministry. If any man desires to act in the holy ministry he must first be baptized for a remission of his sins and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, otherwise he cannot be a teacher unto others. And even then, although he may have had visions, although he may have seen the Lord and had the glories of heaven opened unto his view, though the curtain that hides the future may have been rolled up before him like a scroll, so that he could gaze into the glories of the eternities, all this would give him no authority whatever to administer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He must be called, he must be ordained, he must receive the authority of the holy priesthood.

Well, what condition has the Christian world been in for centuries? Just the same in a great many respects as the heathen world. The people have been in the depths of error. Darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people. "Stay yourselves and wonder," says the Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the latter times, "cry ye out and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers the seers hath he covered." And the Lord said that in that very time, when the people should be in this condition, when they should draw near unto him with their mouth, and honor him with their

lips, while their hearts were far from him, "I will proceed to do a marvelous work among the people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of the wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." Just as the prophet predicted so it has been in the age in which we live. Out of darkness has come forth light. God, from his holy dwelling place, looked down upon the world and beheld that all had gone astray, that none were doing good, no not one. They were divided and contentious, jangling and quarrelling about creeds. Men were crying lo! here, and lo! there; in fact the blind were leading the blind and both were falling into the ditch together. The Lord beheld this from his holy habitation and again restored the truth from the eternal world. He sent his holy angels and revealed anew the everlasting gospel. Truth came out of the earth, and righteousness looked down from heaven, and both joined in one, gave joy to the meek, and became a power among men in the earth.

God called Joseph Smith to the great work of ushering in the last dispensation. He made manifest to him the truth, sent angels to him, enlightened his mind and gave him the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, and as Moses and Elias came to Christ in the Mount, so also did Peter, James and John ordain Joseph Smith to the Melchisedec priesthood. The authority of that priesthood is here now, and the servants of God who are called by that authority go forth and preach the gospel to every creature, for a witness unto all nations, declaring that the end is near, and that the second advent of the Lord is close at hand. People are called upon everywhere to repent of their sins; to be baptized for the remission of sins, and to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and whenever people have received the gospel and obeyed its ordinances his blessing has come to them. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which speaks

direct to their souls, has borne witness that their sins are remitted, that they are raised to a newness of life, and that if faithful unto the end they will be received back into the presence of the Father, to dwell in his society and glory. This is a privilege offered to all the inhabitants of the earth who will believe in this gospel of the latter-days. Yet it is no new thing. It is the old gospel restored. Not a doctrine, not a principle, not a precept therein, but what may be found in the old Scriptures. And this is what people call delusion! The gospel came to us in the various nations of the earth, some belonging to the various religious sects, and some belonging to no sect whatever, and when we received and obeyed it a power took hold of us superior to anything we had ever experienced before, and witnessed to us in an unmistakable manner the truth of this work. It is not a phantom. It is not something imaginary, but it is a solemn fact, as certain as the fact of our existence. No one can reason us out of it, or force us out of it. Why? Because it is stamped upon our spiritual nature, it is a part of our very being. God Almighty has revealed this truth to our souls, and we know it as we know we live. That is why we are here.

Now, our business is to live this religion, to learn further of the ways of God, and to do his will in all things. The matters I have been speaking of are only the A B C of the gospel. We must learn "line upon line and precept upon precept," and continue to grow and increase in a knowledge of the truth, living by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Now I would ask whether this is the case? Having been redeemed, or having the promise of redemption from the effects of original sin, and having had our individual transgressions remitted, are we walking in the straight and narrow way? Are we learning of God? Are we seeking to understand more distinctly and clearly the things that pertain to our salvation? Are we performing the task allotted to us? For we are living in an important day. The day of the second coming of the Savior is nigh at hand, and when he comes shall we be found, as in the parable, among the wise or among the foolish virgins? How is it with

us this afternoon? Have we oil in our lamps to guide us on our path? There is no need for us to do anything in the dark. We should be the children of the light. We are accused of following our leaders in "blind obedience." There is no such thing in the gospel. We have in our midst those who give us the word of the Lord in a church capacity, "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ," but it is our privilege to have the same light. "The manifestations of the spirit are given to every one to profit withal." The Holy Ghost is conferred upon each individual and it is our privilege to see our way. When the true Saints hear the word of life, there is an echo within their hearts and a spirit which testifies to its truthfulness. When the word comes through our inspired leaders it proceeds from the spirit of light which guides us unto all truth. It is the privilege of every Saint to have this light for themselves, the light of God, the light of truth, "the light that is in all things and through all things and round about all things, and is the law by which all things are governed." It is our privilege to be in possession of that faith that we may ask and receive, that we may seek and find, that we may knock and have the door opened unto us. Well, are we doing this? If so, then we rejoice in our religion. The world compared therewith is as nothing; all things are as dross compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. If we are living our religion it is everything with us. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Earthly things perish with the using and when we pass away we must leave them behind; but we will carry with us the gospel, and every one of its truths we have made our own. We will carry with us the holy priesthood and its gifts and powers, if we have been faithful, and will be permitted to mingle with the spirits of just men made perfect, and rejoice in the hope of a glorious resurrection.

Now let us strive to walk in this path that we may gain this great glory. Let us attend to the duties we are required to perform. There is nothing in the gospel that is non-

essential. Every principle that has been revealed unto us is necessary for the salvation of man, for I tell you before we are fit to dwell in the presence of God and enjoy the fullness of his glory we must become like him. Latter-day Saints, the ordinances of the gospel will not save you, they are only aids to salvation. What, then, will save us? A knowledge of truth and the practice thereof, nothing else. We must learn the ways of God. We must walk in his paths. We must be Saints in very deed and walk in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and then by and by where he is we will be also. If we turn our backs upon the truth we will go down to death; we will be beaten with many stripes, we must suffer the consequence of our guilt, and after we have gone through the depths of suffering and sorrow, in the due time of the Lord we may get some kind of a salvation and glory, but where God and Christ are we cannot come, worlds without end.

I know this work is true. God has made it known to me. I bear this testimony to you, and I am willing to meet it before the great judgment seat. God has spoken from the heavens in this our day. He has restored the Gospel of Christ and the authority to preach it. It will go forth to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The wise and the prudent will not receive it, but "the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." This work will go on to this end and purpose. Zion will be built up, Jerusalem will be redeemed, and the time will come when Jesus, our Redeemer shall descend in power and great glory to reign upon the earth. I bear my testimony that this is the work of God, that he requires our whole heart, and that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. Let us put away our follies and our errors. Let us not drink into the spirit of the world. Let us not pattern after the wickedness that is creeping into our midst. Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing! Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. It is only by the practice of righteousness and personal purity, that we will be made fit to dwell in the presence of the Lord. A doctrine contrary to this is the worst kind of delusion.

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