

Priesthood, which is the channel that God has appointed through which to make known His mind and will to the world. It was necessary prior to the organization of this Church, that God should select from the inhabitants of the earth some person through whom to reveal His will to mankind; and it pleased Him to select for this purpose the youthful and untutored boy Joseph Smith, as David of old was His choice, but as there was no Priesthood on the earth when Joseph was called, legally constituted by the authority of heaven to officiate in the name of the Lord, it was necessary therefore that someone should be selected as the first Elder for the beginning of this work, for there has to be a beginning, and he was the one foreordained for the position which he occupied and filled. After calling and setting him apart for the work of introducing and establishing this Gospel of the kingdom, the Lord of course recognized him as His mouthpiece, as His authorized agent, if you please, and it would be absolutely inconsistent, unreasonable and absurd to suppose that after God had called one man and appointed him to this work, that He should pass him by and go to somebody else to accomplish the same purpose. No sensible person would accept for one moment such a proposition. To seriously contemplate any such idea would be charging the Almighty with inconsistency, and with being the author of confusion, discord and schism. The kingdom of God never could be established on earth in any such way.

Through Joseph then, the Lord revealed Himself to the world and through him He chose the first Elders of the Church—men who were honest in their hearts; men

whom He knew would receive the word and labor in connection with Joseph in this great and important undertaking; and all that have been ordained to the Priesthood, and all that have been appointed to any position whatever in this Church, have received their authority and commission through this channel, appointed of God, with Joseph at the head. This is the order, and it could not be otherwise. God will not raise up another prophet, and another people to do the work that we have been appointed to do. He will never ignore those who have stood firm and true from the commencement, as it were, of this work, and who are still firm and faithful, inasmuch as they continue faithful to their trust. There is no question in my mind of their ever proving themselves unfaithful, as a body; for if any of them were to become unworthy in His sight, He would remove them out of their place and call others from the ranks to fill their positions. And thus His Priesthood will ever be found to be composed of the right men for the place, of men whose backs will be fitted for the burden, men through whom He can work and regulate the affairs of His Church according to the counsels of His own will. And the moment that individuals look to any other source, that moment they throw themselves open to the seductive influences of Satan, and render themselves liable to become servants of the devil; they lose sight of the true order through which the blessings of the Priesthood are to be enjoyed; they step outside of the pale of the kingdom of God, and are on dangerous ground. Whenever you see a man rise up claiming to have received direct revelation from the Lord to the Church, independent