

NO TIME TO DO WRONG—SAVE THE CHILDREN.

DISCOURSE BY ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE, SALT LAKE CITY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1871.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

I have been unexpectedly called upon to stand before you to give expression to my feelings, and I trust while so doing that I may be led by the spirit of the Lord. It behooves "Mormon" Elders to be always prepared—"minute men," for they do not know at what moment they may be called upon to perform some duty connected with their calling. The Savior admonished his apostles and followers, saying, "Be ye always ready," and he illustrated it by a parable to the effect that if the good man of the house knew the hour the thief would come he would be prepared for him, and his house would not be broken open. So with the Latter-day Saints, and especially those who bear the priesthood, for they are liable, at any time, to be called upon to go and preach the Gospel to foreign nations, or to get up in the midst of the Saints to bear testimony of the truth, to exhort to faithfulness and diligence, and to show forth the light that is in them in persuading their fellow beings to do that which is right in the sight of God. We should be prepared all the day long for any emergency, no matter whether it be life or death. Life is very uncertain with us, we do not know this moment what the next may bring forth; therefore the religions of the day will not answer for the Latter-day Saints any more than they will answer, in reality, for those who

profess to believe in them, because they are unsound. It behooves us as the children of God to be always prepared for every duty and for every event that may transpire in life, that we may not be taken unawares, caught off our guard or out of the path that leads to eternal life. The Lord may call us when we little think of it, or require labors at our hands when we are not prepared; which would be an awkward position, and very unpleasant to a person who had any regard for his character, before God, and in the society of his friends. There is no time to lay off the armor of Christ; there is not a moment in the lives of the children of men when they can afford to serve the devil; it is always the best to be on our guard, be honest, and honorable in the sight of God and man, which is the path of safety.

Not because honesty is the best policy, but because it is the duty of every individual on the face of the earth to be so; and because, so far as we the Latter-day Saints are concerned, we have voluntarily covenanted with the Lord to keep his commandments and to forsake sin. We have done this because we have been convinced that this is the only way to find favor with God and to obtain salvation in his presence.

Then there is no time to swear, no time to cheat our neighbor or to take