

fifteen or sixteen years after this Church was organized, spiritualism began to make its appearance, and thousands upon thousands of people were ready to receive anything that any charlatan chose to bring before them as the result of spiritual manifestations, until the whole nation of the United States, as well as some nations in Europe, were humbugged by the most extraordinary statements and ideas set forth by those charlatans. Men are ready enough now in some places to believe anything that makes its appearance in the form of spiritualism. All sorts of stories have been told. All kinds of powers have been manifested. Tables have been tipped. I cannot attempt to describe the many kinds of manifestations that have been had among men. But the same willingness to receive the truth, the same unwillingness to receive the Gospel and the blessings and gifts of God, has continued to be manifested, and this belief or credulity concerning spiritualism has not had any favorable effect upon the people in causing them to receive the truth as it is.

Now, there is one power, and one power alone—as I have read to you in this extract from this revelation—through which godliness and the power of God and the gifts of God can be made manifest with any degree of safety—that is, through the Priesthood of the Son of God. Take that authority away from the midst of men, and they would be left precisely in the same condition that the world was in at the time of this revelation to Joseph Smith.

Though Joseph Smith, as I have said, was permitted in his boyhood, to behold the Father and the Son, was ministered unto by holy angels, he did not—and it is a very remarkable and noteworthy fact—he did

not because of these things, those glorious visions that he had, attempt to exercise any authority as a servant of God in the administration of the ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. His conduct in this respect stands out in remarkable contrast with the conduct of men, hundreds of whom, because they receive an impression at some time, that they ought to preach the Gospel, take upon themselves that holy calling, without any further authority than a mere impression upon their minds. He refrained from doing anything of this character. He waited the good pleasure of God. And how consistent it was! How much in accordance—now, we look at it in the light of experience and knowledge—with the will and plan of God, that he should thus wait, and that a holy messenger should be sent with the authority from on high to lay his hands upon him and to restore to the earth through him the everlasting Priesthood, by the administration of which the gifts and blessings and power of God had been manifested in ancient days.

Joseph Smith waited patiently for years, until the due time of the Lord, when He should send a heavenly messenger, and He did send John the Baptist. John held the authority in ancient days to baptize for the remission of sins, and held the keys—having inherited them from his great ancestor Aaron, of the Aaronic Priesthood, which Aaron held, and which authority his descendants exercised among the children of Israel, until the days of John, who was called the Baptist. This John, Jesus said, was a prophet than whom none greater had ever been born of woman. He was a mighty man, and was distinguished above all men upon the face of the earth in this, that God chose him to be