

There are one or two sects in existence which attach a great importance to Priesthood, but the most of them which form the so-called Christian world reject the idea of Priesthood, and deny that it is necessary for it to be bestowed upon man. This feeling has doubtless arisen as a consequence of the abuses that have grown up through the maladministration of what is termed the Priesthood. In rebelling against the Catholic Church and its pretensions men have gone to the other extreme, and have discarded the idea of Priesthood entirely, and claimed that all men are alike before God; that all men are equally endowed with authority from God, and to exercise the power and the authority that were originally bestowed upon those who held the truth.

In these last days, in the organization of this Church, God, in His infinite wisdom, impressed upon his servant Joseph Smith the necessity of there being a rebestowal of the Priesthood, in order to give him the authority to officiate in the ordinances of the Kingdom of God. This must have been impressed upon the prophet's mind at a very early day, from the fact that, notwithstanding he had been brought up among the protestant sects, and had doubtless shared in the views which they entertained respecting the right of all men who were impressed by the spirit, and who were prompted by an inward call to act as ministers of God, he refrained from attempting in the least degree to do anything in the name of God or of Jesus Christ until he had received the power and authority from on high through the bestowal of the Priesthood upon him. The revelations he had received from the Lord, with the ministration of holy angels, did

not, he plainly perceived, authorize him to act as a minister of the Lord in the administration of ordinances. He never attempted to do anything in administering ordinances, or anything that a Priest might do, until he had been ordained of God through the administration of John the Baptist. Then, and not till then, did he officiate in the ordinance of baptism. Much as he and his companion desired that ordinance; much as they desired to become participants in the blessings that flow from the reception of an ordinance of that holy character, he never attempted, until he had been thus empowered from on high, to administer it.

Now, the prevalent idea in the world has been that if a man should be so favored as to receive the ministrations or visitations of angels, or to receive any manifestations of what might be termed a supernatural character, he would be completely invested with the power necessary to preach the Gospel unto his fellow men and to administer all the ordinances thereof. But the Prophet Joseph not only received the ministrations of angels, but actually had revelations from God, which are written in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and which are now the word of God to the Church. He received these revelations through the inspiration of the Almighty. He also by means of the Urim and Thummim translated the Book of Mormon; was, in fact, a seer as well as a revelator; had the spirit of prophecy to predict those things that should take place in the future, and many events that have since taken place were prophesied of by him before he was really ordained of God to administer the ordinances of life and salvation. I know that this is an exceptional instance. It may be possible that there is not another