

Address to the  
Membership of the  
Lamoni Stake



By the Bishopric

1911



JOSEPH ROBERTS, BISHOP.

*“There is nothing good but what we as Saints should stand for. The cause of temperance, the cause of freedom and education, the cry of the oppressed and distressed, as also the pleadings of the innocent, to all these and many more, as children of the light, we can not turn a deaf ear.”*

# The Financial Law; Its Requirements and How to Comply

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As Set Forth by  
**THE LAMONI STAKE BISHOPRIC**  
Lamoni, Iowa, 1911

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Addressed to the Membership of  
the Stake

## LAMONI STAKE

Territorially it consists of eleven counties: Union, Clark, Lucas, Monroe, Ringgold, Decatur, Wayne, and Appanoose in Iowa; Worth, Harrison, and Mercer in Missouri.

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#### Presidency:

John Smith, President.  
John F. Garver, Counselor.  
Richard S. Salyards, Counselor.

#### Bishopric:

Joseph Roberts, Bishop.  
Richard J. Lambert, Counselor.  
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## ANNOUNCEMENT

**T**HIS booklet is created for the purpose of reaching every Latter Day Saint home in Lamoni Stake, to be read and carefully considered by the members of the home.

It is our endeavor to set forth in simplicity and clearness the faith of the church as touching the duties of the membership, with respect to the property holdings of each.

For the purpose of those who desire to enter into a complete observance of the law of Christ, it is our aim to place opportunity in the way for such observance.

We have tried to avoid stating mere opinions but, rather, giving the clear statement of truth as revealed in the law.

No distinction is made between rich and poor, young and old, priesthood and membership. The only requirement is membership within the stake to make the contents of this booklet applicable.

The plans herein contained are so arranged to accomplish these ends: that this department of the Lord's work may be built up, more thoroughly understood, more uniformly complied with, and a proper and permanent record made in the office of the Stake Bishopric.

We solicit your most earnest and prayerful consideration of this booklet and ask your hearty cooperation in our endeavors to increase the usefulness of the Saints and organize the work of the Bishopric to be of greater service to the church.

Your obedient servants,

JOSEPH ROBERTS, *Bishop.*

RICHARD J. LAMBERT, *Counselor.*

OSCAR ANDERSON, *Counselor.*



RICHARD J. LAMBERT, COUNSELOR

*"We believe that the financial law touches every member of the church in one or more ways."*

## DUTIES OF THE BISHOPRIC AND PRIVILEGES OF THE SAINTS

THE Bishopric of Lamoni Stake are interested in performing their duties, for they realize that they are “called to engage in a great work, which shall bring them honor and glory, or shame, contempt, and final great loss and destruction; as they shall in uprightness, faithfulness and diligence discharge their duties acceptably to God, or shall in carelessness, slothfulness, or wickedness fail in their calling and ministry.”

We understand our duties to be:

First, Compliance by us as individuals with the law which should govern every Saint in the administration of his financial affairs, in order that our teaching may be made effectual by our example.

*Second*, Teaching the principles of that law with vigor and in plainness, to every son and daughter of the covenant resident in Lamoni Stake.

*Third*, Using the means placed in our hands as a power for good, and not “for the purposes of self-aggrandizement,” and in such manner that no one can justly feel his confidence in our integrity, at least, if not in our integrity and judgment, has been misplaced.

*Fourth*, Understanding the position and condition of each and every Saint, so that we may aid them in performing their various tasks.

In at least three of the four leading and general duties enumerated we are more or less dependent upon the individual Saints. For instance, How can we teach the principles of the law with vigor and in plainness unless we catch and retain the interest of the Saints in our speaking and writing? How can we use means justly and wisely, except the means is placed in our hands to a sufficient amount that it can be used economically? And, how can we understand the condition of each Saint unless we have a statement from him as to what that condition is?

The duties of the Bishopric and the duties and privileges of the Saints should join just as closely as the tenon and mortise of a perfect joint, and to do this they must make a study, first of the law, and then of each other. In order that we may place it within your power to know whether we are in the line of duty or not, we present this brief statement of our understanding of the law.

We believe that the financial law touches *every member of the church* in one or more ways, either as donors to the general store, or as beneficiaries of it, or as both donors and beneficiaries.

It may be possible you do not possess any property on which to pay tithing; but if this is the case you are likely often in need of a little help. If you are keeping the moral law you are entitled to this help, just as much as you would be under obligation to pay your tithing if you possessed something to tithe.

We believe that if you possess enough to begin housekeeping you owe tithing to the Lord's storehouse. We will go further: if you own a watch, a bicycle, a pony, a coaster wagon, or a croquet set, you owe tithing. This is the law and it applies to all Saints. Some missionaries have said they owe no tithing, for their wants and needs for the support of their families are taken from the tithing funds in the hands of the bishop. This is an error, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and all that dwell therein." If the missionary and his family do not keep this law of tithing they reject the Lord's claim as far as *their* property is concerned, the source of income making no difference, hence they can not in consistency accept the Lord's claim as regarding their bodies and minds. (Read General Conference resolution number 363.)

Did you ever compare the government of the church with the political Government under which we live? There are some principles which are common to both.

The Government demands a certain amount from each person as taxes: but does the Government's interest in the individual cease when he has paid the tax assessed to him? You would not uphold the officers at the next polling time if you thought it did. Where would the next year's tax come from if the Government did not spend the greater part of its effort in helping the individuals care for that which is left after taxes have been paid? The bishopric of Lamoni Stake believe that if they did not spend more effort in trying to get the people to care for their stewardships after they have paid their surplus, their tithing, or their freewill offerings, than they do toward getting hold of these portions, that they are not doing their duty, and the good accruing from keeping the law of contribution or contributing will not be realized. Therefore when we make suggestions as to the ways in which you can curtail your expenses it is with the thought that your continued prosperity is our greatest responsibility. You readily see that the material prosperity of the pauper is a matter which the law of the land handles in both directions. The law says to the pauper, "You may have meat, and flour, and potatoes, and beans, and we

will pay for them. But do not ask us to pay for tobacco, and liquor, and livery hire."

The church does not stigmatize its poor as paupers; but the church does say, or at least the bishopric of Lamoni Stake undertakes to say to those whom it is its duty to aid, "You are one of the worthy poor, and we can furnish you coal, flour, beans, a little meat, etc., if we can not put you in a position where you can furnish these for yourselves, but first let us try to help you make a living for yourselves." If these individuals are worthy they will thank us for the opportunity; if they are unworthy we hold that we have no right to provide for them *out of the contributions of the Saints*. We believe in the spirit of the revelation given to Joseph Smith, jr., for his father, in March, 1833: "that those things that are provided for you, to bring to pass my work, are not taken from you and given to those that are not worthy, and thereby you are hindered in accomplishing those things which I have commanded you."

But hold! If we are permitted to say to the poor man, "You can not have meat three times a day, and a fine turnout or automobile for your pleasure," are we not under the obligation to say to the Saint who holds much of this world's goods, "You should not eat meat three times a day; neither should you have a fine, costly team and carriage, or an automobile, unless you need it"? and teach all that they are accountable to God not only for rendering to him that portion which he claims, but also for the portion which is retained.

Is it not a fact that the difference lies largely in an imperfect conception of our rights, not taking into account the rights of God? Why should the man who has denied himself for a few years, in order that he might lay up property, be permitted to spend it unsparingly, any more than the one who receives from day to day and fails to lay up a store should spend without stint?

#### A CONDENSED STATEMENT OF THE LAW.

The tendency among many is to say, "Well, when I have paid my one tenth to the storehouse of the Lord, the rest is mine with which to do as I please." Not so, my brother, my sister. Unless you are prepared to acknowledge the ownership of God in all your estate, it is a waste of means to pay tithing; and if you do acknowledge such ownership then you can not do as you please with the nine tenths, unless you please to do according to his will.

We believe the law of God to be, and we will state it in as brief terms as we can, in order to be more easily understood:

1. A complete consecration of each person's faculties and properties to the cause of Christ. That portion which a man turns into the bishop's hands and that portion which he claims and is permitted to retain should alike be consecrated to that cause; and as his faculties of mind and body are divided between use for himself and family and for the remainder of mankind, so should his material store be divided.

2. Each man as head of family should provide for himself and family to such an extent that they can reach the highest degree of efficient service to the brotherhood of mankind. The apostle's deduction that "if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," we believe to be a justifiable one.

3. One may be wholly consecrated to the Lord's work in body and store, yet retain all his property except the tenth, which the Lord always instructs us to place in the storehouse. Those who come in this class are the ones who possess only enough to supply their needs. But all are subject to the law of tithing.

4. Each person must lay all things before the bishop by making a property statement or inventory and filing it with him. In doing this "it is not right to descend to very great particulars."

5. We believe that the Lord's word in Doctrine and Covenants 128 means that in each stake, to say the least, an association should be organized for "those who are desirous and willing to form parts in colonization" and "other organizations or associations than those simply pastoral or agricultural." This should be done in order to enable all to be useful to the fullest extent.

## WHY HONOR THE TEMPORAL LAW?

1. We believe it is impossible to please God without honoring his whole law. The same God that teaches us the necessity of baptism, laying on of hands, etc., also teaches us the necessity of honoring the temporal law.

2. It brings more peace and happiness in this life, and we can feel assured that we are laying up "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

3. If we are officers in the church, and have complied with the law, we can conscientiously teach it to others and can recommend it to others as a positively safe and satisfactory investment.

4. If we are parents, we can set a proper example before our children.

5. If we are children we can add to the happiness of our parents by showing them we are following the good example set by them.

6. It will give us greater interest in the church and make it easier for others to do right.

7. It removes burdens from those who are overworked to care for their earthly possessions, and lightens the burdens of the worthy ones who are striving diligently to give to their loved ones the most necessary things of life.

8. We believe that God would not give us a plan to follow if it would not make us happier and better satisfied by following it. If we have faith in God, we should be willing to trust him and do the things that he says. Without faith it is impossible to please him.

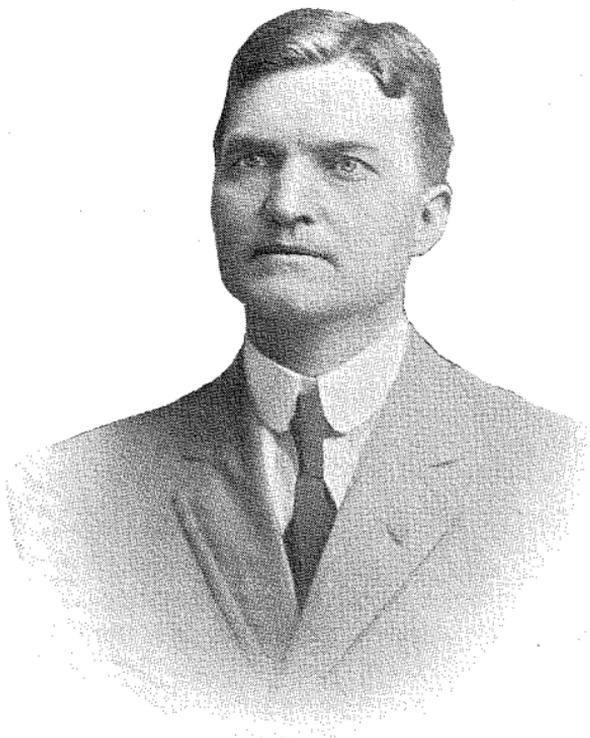


## THE LAW OF ONE TENTH

**F**ROM the earliest time there has been, in the gospel economy, systems of giving offerings to the Lord.

Some of these systems have been for special purposes, or for administration under certain exigencies that have arisen, and at least one of them has been a standing law of God's ministry and people in all ages of the world, and that system is known to us as the law of tithing, the payment of a tenth for the support of the general work of the church.

Wherever God has had a people on the face of the earth sufficiently advanced to receive communication from him, they are either recorded as having yielded obedience to this law, or we see that they are commanded so to do.



OSCAR ANDERSON, COUNSELOR.

*"We believe that God would not give us a plan to follow if it would not make us happier and better satisfied by following it."*

Wherever the spirit and the letter of this law has been honored by any people, we have an example of progression; but when either or both the spirit and the letter of it is forgotten, there has been decay and retrogression.

It has probably, in all ages, met the same class of objectors, among them being those who strive to maintain that it can not be God's law because when it is executed, it does not *produce* equality; also those who would have us believe God is not its author because its provisions have considerable rigidity to them, (not yielding to personal notions and whims.) We will briefly notice these objections, for obvious reasons.

In order to get the proper understanding we must know that the law of tithing is part of a system, not an entire, complete, financial system. This is all its friends claim for it. In the light of this fact, what man of reflection will make the objection that it does not produce equality? Is each part of a system compelled to do the work of the whole, else admit its spuriousness? God never claimed the producing of equality as the office work of this part of the law. That particular function is left for the law of consecration of surplus. But, the law of tithing, while not producing equality of itself, applies equally to all men, and continues to apply to all after equality is produced by its sister statute (surplus consecration); it therefore tends in the general direction of equality.

Did you ever notice that the man who makes this objection, while he may claim to be a believer in consecration and freewill offerings, never practices anything except haphazard giving, and not a great deal of that? This being true, the conclusion is inevitable, that there is too much equality in this law to suit those who object to it; that is, their real objection is that it applies too equally—it applies to all, and they are included.

The other objection, as to it being a rigid, inflexible law, is even easier answered. Fact is, it is an earmark of genuineness, partaking of the same rigidity as the law of repentance and the ordinance of baptism. Of course no one will get credit with God for complying with its demands unless he does so willingly; neither would a ten-year-old boy get any recognition of God for being baptized if he were flogged into the water. We must comply with God's laws and ordinances of our own free will, but always in the Lord's own stated way. All his laws are rigid, but they are not all rigid in the same way.

We can conceive of no valid objection to this law of tithing

which, if logically applied, will not destroy many other laws or statutes of the gospel. Can you? If you think you can, let us canvass it with you; then tell your friends about it. But don't tell your friends before giving us a chance at it, and then forget to tell them our answer.

#### WHAT THE LAW OF TITHING IS.

The law of tithing, taken from various passages in all the books of the church, and condensed in our own language, is as follows: When man recognizes God as his creator and makes a covenant to serve him, he shows this recognition, as also his gratitude for what he has and is by yielding one tenth of all that he possesses to the officer appointed by God and his people. After all has been tithed the person goes on about his business of providing for his family and accumulating property just as before. At the end of the year, or at any rate at least once each year, an invoice should be made, and if an increase appears, one tenth of the increase should be rendered, the same as at the first. Its requirements bear every mark of divinity; equality of application, simplicity, and justice.

We find the law stated in various passages of scripture, only a few of which we append hereto, with the citation to each. We ask you to study them, giving them the same receptive consideration you give to any other scriptures.

#### INSPIRED TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

And Abram (Abraham) gave him (Melchisedec) tithes of all he had taken.—Genesis 14:20.

Wherefore, Abram paid unto him tithes of all that he had, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given him more than that which he had need.—Genesis 14:39.

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's. . . . And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock . . . the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.—Leviticus 27:30, 32, I. T.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.—Malachi 3:10, I. T.

For this Melchisedec, . . . who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all, . . . Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.—Hebrews 7:1, 2, 4.

You (the Pharisees) pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin;

and have omitted the weightier things of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.—Matthew 23:20. (See also Luke 11:42.)

AUTHORIZED EDITION BOOK OF MORMON.

Yea, humble yourselves even as the people in the days of Melchisedec. . . . And it was this same Melchisedec to whom Abraham paid tithes of one tenth part of all that he possessed.—Alma 10:7, 8.

Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye *all the tithes* into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. . . . And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.—3 Nephi 11:10-15.

BOOK OF DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS.

Behold, now it is called to-day (until the coming of the Son of Man), and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned (at his coming).—64:5.

In order to place the church in a position to carry on the promulgation of the gospel, *and as a means of fulfilling the law*, the twelve will take measures in connection with the bishop, to execute the law of tithing.—114:1.

I gave this command (section 114) unto the quorum next in authority in spiritual things that the scattered ones, and those who had been made to suffer might have assurance that I would not suffer that he whom I had called should betray the confidence of the faithful, nor squander the moneys of the treasury for the purposes of self. And for the reason that the law of tithing was but little understood, and would not be observed, unless it should be taught, and enforced by the precepts of the chief missionaries of the church. . . . Whatever burden the quorum may have felt rested upon them in this regard, (that is, teaching the law of tithing as a leading duty, and looking after the disbursement of funds,) they are now absolved from, the end designed by it having been reached.—122:5.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS.

No. 174. That the law of tithing is binding on the church in its scattered condition.—Page 35.

No. 210. That the law of tithing as given in the revelation of 1838, and referred to in the revelation of 1861, is applicable to the church in its present condition, and should be observed.—Page 47.

No. 363. Resolved, That ministers who are eligible to the law of tithing, and who refuse to comply with it; or who ignore the law by neither paying nor making proper effort to pay, are not justly entitled to claim upon the church for family support.—Page 96.

## HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

After commencing and rejoicing before the Lord on this occasion, we agreed to enter into the following covenant with the Lord, viz: "That if the Lord will prosper us in our business, . . . that we may obtain means to pay our debts, . . . after that, of all that he shall give us, we will give a tenth, to be bestowed upon the poor in his church, or as he shall command; and that we will be faithful over that which he has entrusted to our care, that we may obtain much; and that our children after us, shall remember to observe this sacred and holy covenant; and that our children, and our children's children, may know of the same, we have subscribed our names with our own hands."

"JOSEPH SMITH, JR.

"OLIVER COWDERY."

—Vol. 1, p. 529.

## CARE OF THE POOR

A MORAL RESPONSIBILITY; HOW PROVIDED FOR IN THE LAW.

**G**OD so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish; but have everlasting life." The poor come in for a share of God's love, are called blessed, and are promised inheritance upon the earth, to possess it in time and eternity.

THE POOR ARE WITH US.

Peculiar to the divine message of love, the poor in the world have the gospel preached to them. Some hear and obey the message with gladness, thus becoming members of the kingdom and fold of God. On account of sickness or failing health, or having grown aged or infirm, some are deprived of the means of self-support. Some are widows and orphans that through death of husband and father are deprived of support. Through poor management or otherwise some become needy. Others through lack of proper opportunity can not be other than poor. All these and more are catalogued "the poor."

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY.

As brethren of one great, common family, the church, we are our brother's keeper. The same moral responsibility attaches to the church in caring for its poor as attaches to the care of the sick or watching over its membership, creating spiritual growth or casting out iniquity. A man that will not provide for the needs of his family should have no family; so the church has little business with membership if it is powerless or unwilling to make the necessary provisions for its members along both spiritual and temporal lines.

ALL POOR DO NOT HAVE CLAIM UPON THE CHURCH.

The distinction must be made between those who are worthy and those who are unworthy. If it were not so the idler could eat the bread and wear the garments of the laborer, which the Lord says should not be. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:12.) Furthermore, "The idler shall not have place in the church, except he repents and mends his ways."—Doctrine and Covenants 75:5. This includes idle poor as also idle rich. The gospel of Christ makes men and women industrious, not slothful. "For it is not meet that the things which belong to the children of the kingdom, should be given to them that are not worthy, or to dogs, or the pearls to be cast before swine."—Doctrine and Covenants 41:2.

## ALL POOR DO NOT REQUIRE THE SAME SORT OF CARE.

The helpless must receive directly from the Lord's storehouse such comforts of life as their necessities demand. The helpful poor, those who are able to perform service, need only the opportunity furnished to enable them to wholly or in part provide for their own needs. This is helping others to help themselves. The latter class are not asking that something be given them aside from the mere opportunity to earn support, neither do they wish something for nothing.

## ALL TO SHARE IN THE CARE OF THE POOR.

Pure religion prompts the individual to visit the homes of want, and succor the distressed, to do good to all, and especially to those of the church. These are some of the things which constitute, using scriptural language, "a neighbor."

This is one of the places where we need not wait to be called into service by others. The power is resident within each to bring to pass much righteousness. It is only the slothful who wait to be commanded in all things. As individuals, as branches, as districts, as stakes, as a church, all share in the care of the poor, each performing their several duties as becometh Saints.

## THE POOR ARE TO BE ESTABLISHED.

The Lord intends, by revealing his will to the church in these latter days and by calling and setting apart individuals to teach his law, to bring to pass a condition in the church where there will be no poor, in that there shall be no rich. This is taught in the law given to govern this church, which law is the same now (1911) as when first given. The Lord holds ownership of all the earth, we are but stewards, each is entitled to a sufficiency for himself and family—no more, no less. If we have more than is sufficient, it is to be given to the Lord's storehouse. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:9, 14.)

This condition of no-poor-no-rich is to be brought about in the Lord's way (not man's), for he has promised to provide for his Saints. This is the way: "The poor shall be exalted" (poor no longer) "in that the rich are made low," (no longer rich).—Doctrine and Covenants 101:1. The law as stated in Doctrine and Covenants 42:8, 9, 10, 11, is the leveling process to exalt the poor and humble the rich.

New converts are continuously being made to the church, out from the world of rich and poor. If these converts are poor, they

can not remain so; if they are rich, they can not continue so, under the law of Christ.

True to these facts is the statement of the Master, "I will consecrate of the riches of those who embrace my gospel among the Gentiles, unto the poor of my people who are of the house of Israel."—Doctrine and Covenants 42:11.

So the rule applies to the new converts, the rich will consecrate, the poor will be provided for, all having sufficient, consistent with just needs. These needs are: first a home, an inheritance; second, a stewardship, an occupation for all who are able to perform service. Putting it in a more simple way, everybody needs a home and something to do. The Lord's way of establishing his Saints is to provide all who need with inheritances and stewardships. The Lord can not do this until the Saints are willing to comply wholly with his law that makes Saints equal, and organize to carry into operation the law of equality. The poor may then be established, and, until such time the poor will be among us.

#### THE IDEAL CONDITION TO OBTAIN.

As a result of living the perfect law of the gospel there were no poor among the saints in Enoch's day. (Genesis 7:23 Inspired Translation.) Until such law was understood and fully observed there may have been, and probably were, poor among Enoch's people, as there are among the Saints in this latter day dispensation. Christ made the statement to some of his disciples, "The poor ye have with you always." True, they had, but had the statement been made to Enoch it could not have applied. Only through the failure to carry into operation the whole gospel law can this statement be made applicable to us, unless it could be construed to mean the poor in the world, and in that sense we would have the poor among us. But the ideal condition to obtain is where the Saints are established under the terms of gospel equality.

The poor, as also the rich, may hold membership in the church. I know of no rule that will keep them from holding membership and at the same time continue the poor and remain the rich. This seems to be left with the membership as to whether they will continue so or not. If the rich determine to continue in the church and not consecrate of their properties, some of the poor will out of necessity need perhaps to continue poor. Just to the extent that the membership comply with the law of consecration will be the extent that the poor will be provided for in the law, thus determining the measure of equality existing.

Yes, we can remain in the church with our riches and with our poverty and take our chance. Here is our chance: "If any man shall take of the abundance which I have made and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor, and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment."—Doctrine and Covenants 101:2. Do we care for the chance? What is this portion to impart according to the law of the gospel? Answer: All, except that which is sufficient for himself and family. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:9.) We must not lose sight of the fact, however, that we shall not be able to purchase eternal life by means of offering our possessions alone; for it will profit us nothing, according to the Apostle Paul, though we bestow all our goods to feed the poor and have not the pure love of God connected with our labors.

What has been done and what is now being done by the church by way of helping the poor is commendable. Homes have been established for the aged, a college erected for the education of the young, the sanitarium builded for our infirm, a children's home completed, the Order of Enoch organized; progress is steadily being made and the future seems bright. But the ideal has not obtained, the redemption of Zion has only begun, the poor are not established upon their inheritances nor granted stewardships. Before such conditions do obtain heed must be paid to the word of the Lord which has been given if the church is to receive and enjoy the blessings which have been looked for when Zion is fully redeemed. "Therefore, hearken once again unto the voice of inspiration, in warning and instruction, and conform to that which is given and receive what is awaiting the upright and the pure in heart."—Doctrine and Covenants 129:8.

## MINISTERS' FAMILIES

**T**HERE is no higher mission in this life than the mission of establishing and maintaining a God-fearing home. No minister for Christ can properly represent the gospel in carrying the message to the world while his own family is not a fit example of Christian righteousness. It seems necessary for the Lord to call attention to these facts from time to time. In Doctrine and Covenants 90:6 is this language given to one of the Lord's servants: "You shall set in order your own house, for there are many things that are not right in your house." Read also paragraphs 8 and 9 of the same section and note the importance of men called to represent God first seeing that their own households are in order before asking others to clean up. The call is not only made to the ministry, but is further extended to the inhabitants of Zion, and comes ringing down to us as inhabitants of one of the stakes of Zion, and causing us to look well to the experience of the past, with much profit we trust. "Now, I, the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them; and their children are also growing up in wickedness; they also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness. These things ought not to be, and must be done away from among them."

When the church says to the brother, "Brother, you enter the mission field and devote all your time to the ministry," the brother has the privilege of answering either "Yes," or "No." If the brother answers, "No," that perhaps is the end of the matter, but should the answer be "Yes, I will go," then there is a shifting of responsibility. The church must now assume the grave responsibility of providing for the needs of that missionary's home, and if the church fails in this responsibility and that brother's home is illy provided, the children growing up in idleness and wickedness, then that missionary is justified—in fact it is his duty to say to the church, "You are not caring for my family as you should, consequently I am going home to provide for my own."

Those of the Saints who are heads of families who are not called to the mission field but are permitted to remain at home and care for their own, how are your children being cared for? Are you providing a comfortable home, with nourishing food and ample clothing, educating them and also furnishing profitable employment, so they are not growing up in idleness, that when the children become men and women they may be useful? This is exactly what

the church should do for the missionary's family when the responsibility is assumed by the church in calling the head of the family, the husband and father, into the missionary field. It is the desire of the worthy missionary, (which desire is akin to all that is noble and true in men or angels,) to see to it that his family is amply provided, the children growing into manhood and womanhood fitted in strength of character and trained to usefulness, that they, too, may be a means of making the world better. Who is there that could deny this right to the devoted missionary and his sacrificing family?



## COMPLETE CONSECRATION

1. One Tenth—a tithe—Hebrews 7:2; Doctrine and Covenants 106:1.
2. Surplus Properties.—Doctrine and Covenants 42:8, 9; 106:1, 2.
3. Retained Property.—Doctrine and Covenants 42:9.
4. Subsequent Surplus.—Doctrine and Covenants 42:10; 81:4.
5. Freewill Offerings.—Doctrine and Covenants 129:8.

When the individual enters into a complete life in the gospel he becomes a laborer with God for the accomplishment of the work intrusted to all. He can not separate his personal self from his property belongings and say, "I will serve the Lord with my whole heart, but not with my earthly possessions." Life, labor, property, all should be dedicated to the Master's service if the Saint is to be blessed in his deeds.

The Lord holds ownership, we are but stewards. "I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and builded the earth as a very handy work; and all things therein are mine. . . . For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as stewards over earthly blessings which I have made and prepared for my creatures."—Doctrine and Covenants 101:2; 101:10. Obedience to the laws governing the kingdom makes us legal heirs in Zion, and as legal heirs we are then responsible for our stewardship and should fully sense the responsibility. Each of the following headings is a part of a complete consecration and applies in some one or more forms to all the membership.

## 1. ONE TENTH.

One tenth of all the Lord has blessed us with is the Lord's. The individual is not steward over that portion. Whether we have much or little, the Lord should be honored with that which belongs to him, and the amount should be consecrated to his service. For a more complete discussion of this phase of consecration read "The Law of One Tenth" see page 12 of this booklet.

## 2. SURPLUS PROPERTIES.

The law (Doctrine and Covenants 42:8,) requires that the properties of the Saints be placed before the bishopric. This is accomplished by means of a property statement, setting forth the true condition of all properties held by the individual.

The one tenth by this showing may readily be ascertained, and at once put in the hands of the bishop for the service of the Lord. The nine tenths remaining, through the mutual consent of the one consecrating and the bishopric, may determine the surplus property, if any, or, on the other hand, may determine the needs of the individual. That portion which is more than sufficient for the needs of himself and family is a surplus which should be consecrated and turned over to the bishop, (Doctrine and Covenants 42:9; 106:1.)

## 3. RETAINED PROPERTIES.

The individual parts with that portion of the holdings which is not needed. The property which is needed is retained and he is made "a steward over his own property." (Doctrine and Covenants. 42:9.) This property which is retained for the needs of himself and family, is just as truly consecrated as the portion which is consecrated and placed in the hands of the bishop. It is not necessary that we have to part with property in order that it be consecrated, any more than we need to part with our lives in order to consecrate our lives to the service of the Master. But as it is necessary for us to use our lives in his service, in order for them to be consecrated, so is it necessary for all our property to be used in his service, both that which is placed in the hands of the bishop and that which is retained.

## 4. SUBSEQUENT SURPLUS.

If after the individual has gone thus far in the line of consecration and afterward there are still found to be properties remaining which are not needed by the individual, the law designates "a residue," which is also to be placed in the hands of the

bishop. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:10.) Every steward is expected to act wisely and improve upon his stewardship, and if so there will be an increase, of which one tenth is the Lord's, which increase may also be a surplus to be consecrated unto the Lord. "You are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just; and all this for the benefit of the church of the living God, that every man may improve upon his talent, that every man may gain other talents; yea, even an hundred fold, to be cast into the Lord's storehouse."—Doctrine and Covenants 81:4.

#### 5. FREEWILL OFFERING.

Complete consecration does not impoverish the Saint. In fact, its purpose is to amply provide, in taking that which is not needed and placing it where it may be utilized by those who need. A system that would so cripple the stewardship of the individual as to make it impossible for him to make further gains and consequently further consecration, would be to destroy the mill which grinds the grist to make the bread to feed the family.

There is an abundance, so that each of his own free will may consecrate by way of offerings to a worthy cause, whether such demand be in the church or outside. There is nothing good but what we as Saints should stand for. The cause of temperance, the cause of freedom and education, the cry of the oppressed and distressed, as also the pleadings of the innocent, to all these and many more, as children of the light, we can not turn a deaf ear. The power is within us, of our own selves, to bring to pass much righteousness, and we do not need to be commanded in all things before we can act on the side of truth and righteousness. If our neighbor is suffering, our religion tells us to furnish relief if within our power. We can look after the elders' needs that come among us, provide places of worship, look after branch expenses, and for many other purposes make these freewill offerings from our holdings, for there is an abundance and to spare.

The opportunity to comply with the whole law of consecration is at the door of every Saint in Lamoni Stake. "And, behold, none are exempt from this law who belong to the church of the living God; yea, neither the bishop, neither the agent, who keepeth the Lord's storehouse; neither he who is appointed in a stewardship over temporal things."—Doctrine and Covenants 70:3.

## GOSPEL EQUALITY IN OUTLINE

1. Law of Accumulation.
  - a. Opportunity.
  - b. Industry.
  - c. Economy.
2. Law of Contribution. (Complete consecration.)
  - a. Tithes and offerings.
  - b. Consecration and surplus.
3. Law of Distribution.
  - a. Through bishopric.
  - b. Thorough organization.

Gospel equality consists in carrying into operation three fundamental laws so essential in their effect upon society that to leave one of these principles out would be to produce a condition of inequality: We shall consider these laws in their order.

### I. THE LAW OF ACCUMULATION.

A principle so necessary in producing and maintaining true equality, but, when taken apart, independent of the other two laws, will produce entirely different results. An example of such results is the economic condition of the world to-day—a greed for gain, with no thought other than heaping riches unto themselves, some having the ability to amass great fortunes, others with no such ability, existing in poverty. So the world moves on in its mad rush for the mere accumulation of earthly treasure, ever maintaining a condition of inequality, the result of carrying into operation the one law only—that of accumulation, hence, the distinction, *rich* and *poor*.

But when true equality is carried out under the gospel economy, Saints will be anxiously engaged in the production of wealth, not for the purpose of hoarding to be used in selfish ways, but for the sole purpose of establishing the righteousness of God among men. Each is permitted under the law to retain a sufficient amount for himself and family, consistent with just needs. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:14.)

Brethren with ability to accumulate wealth, who see nothing but the needs of themselves, are selfish, and have yet to learn the lesson which teaches to impart of our substance in the way outlined in the word of God. Again, the brother with ability to accumulate the treasures of this earth, who is not willing to do so, except to the extent of providing the mere necessities of life

for himself and family, without exercising himself further in the interest of others, is not only selfish, but slothful as well, having not the interest of the Lord's work at heart, and with this lesson to learn, that according to the talents given so shall be required by our heavenly Father. Still another: That individual who is able, but not willing to provide for himself and family, but asks that others furnish this support for him, is worse than an infidel, and this is the lesson taught in the word: Such an one must repent or be cast out from among God's people.

*Obtain* all the money you can in righteousness, is the sentiment contained in Doctrine and Covenants 48:2. We bring nothing into this world with us by way of property. That which we may accumulate through life comes to us as a result of energy and thrift, having the opportunity favorable to such exercise. The Lord has decreed from the beginning that man should labor for his daily bread, also that the idler should not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer, nor have a place among the Saints. So it is intended that our people through industry, according to their several abilities, having the opportunity present, should obtain means as a result of honest industry.

It is also enjoined upon the Saints to *practice* economy. "*Save* all the money that you can" is just as necessary as to *obtain* all that you can in righteousness. If we are ever to be helpers in carrying out gospel equality, opportunity should be sought that through industry and economy some of the things which go to make up the comforts of life may be secured. However, with all our opportunities, industry, and practiced economy, should we be successful in making good accumulations, and be so selfish as to refuse to carry into operation the next fundamental principle which makes plain what our duties are as we go along, making steady gains, we shall fall short of performing our part in the labor of love, which, together with God, all are called to perform.

Having briefly outlined the first statute of the law of equality, we now proceed to examine the second.

## 2. LAW OF CONTRIBUTION.

Should the mighty ocean refuse to yield to the demands of Nature's laws that portion of its vast accumulation of water furnished her from various sources, permitting no more of the vast wealth in store to go out over the thirsty land to bless the earth, that the soil might bring forth its abundance to cheer the hearts of

men, the misery caused by such a refusal could not be depicted. The Creator has not so intended.

Unless there is continuously in operation a law governing whereby accumulated wealth shall give up its excess to bless and cheer the hearts of suffering humanity, the rich will continue to grow richer and the poor poorer, and who can portray the misery and oppression? The Almighty never so intended!

Men of the present are awake to the fact that there are problems confronting society to-day knocking at the door for solution. Will the experience of the past, combined with the wisdom of the age, suffice to furnish a correct solution of the social problems confronting the world, is a question for some to consider; but the fact we should like to impress upon the minds of the Saints is, that as a people we are not required to look to the world for a solution of the problems affecting our social welfare.

As God's peculiar people we are "in the world but not of it." The Lord purposes to provide for his Saints, but it must needs be done in his own way. (Doctrine and Covenants 101:2.) The way has been marked out by the Lord, and not by the wisdom of this world. The leveling process is, that the poor are to be exalted in that the rich are made low. (Doctrine and Covenants 101:2.) Saints are called upon to comply completely with the second statute of the law of equality, and make the required contribution by way of tithes and offerings, consecrations, and surplus, that the Lord's storehouse might be amply provided for. For a more detailed account of the law of consecration, see "Complete Consecration" on page 22 of this booklet.

Though as members of the church we should be able to act wisely and to make good as producers of wealth, that through our thrift and sacrifice the Lord's storehouse is amply provided, unless the Lord has established a means whereby this property belonging to the church is justly distributed and placed in the true channels designated in the law of the gospel, there can be no such thing as true equality. Here is where the grave responsibility lies of those made judges in Israel, to render a true and equitable account of the funds which come into the Lord's treasury. (Read Doctrine and Covenants 64:8.)

This responsibility is not attached to the financial agents of the church alone. They are powerless of themselves to make the proper distribution to bring about equality under the law. The Lord speaks and says what else is to be done in carrying into operation the law of distribution. In 1832, (about two years

after section 42 was given—which section provides for the contributions of the Saints into the Lord’s storehouse), the Lord speaks: “The time has come, and is now at hand; and, behold, and lo, it must needs be that there be an organization of my people, in regulating and establishing the affairs of the storehouse for the poor of my people, . . . for a permanent and everlasting establishment and order unto my church, . . . that you may be equal in the bands of heavenly things; yea, and earthly things also.”—Doctrine and Covenants 77:1. Again is reiterated: “It is wisdom in me; therefore, a commandment I give unto you, that ye organize yourselves, and appoint every man his stewardship.”—Doctrine and Covenants 101:2. We are forced to the conclusion that gospel equality can not be obtained without proper distribution, and proper distribution can not be effected except through concerted action of the bishopric and organization.

In the Reorganization the law must be carried out in its completeness, and these revelations are made applicable to us as a church and are referred to in Doctrine and Covenants 128:8 as, “these organizations contemplated in the law.” Also 128:1, “that the bishopric take such measures as will bring to pass the organization,” etc. Organization is not in order until the willingness on the part of the membership is manifest in their deeds of sacrifice. “Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind.”

## HOW TO PROCEED

**A**S REPRESENTATIVES of the gospel we are responsible to the Saints, to the church, and to our heavenly Father. Should we fail in our mission to teach the Saints their duties along financial lines we fall under condemnation and merit the disapproval of the Master, as well as of our brethren.

That there may be no doubts nor uncertainties with reference to the teachings of the Lamoni Stake Bishopric we go on record and stand committed to the faith of the church. If such teachings be in harmony with the law of Christ the individual who rejects the teaching must stand condemned before the law. And, on the other hand, should the representations be at fault, it becomes the kind act of a brother or sister to point out the error.

Do not read the matter contained in this booklet and pass idly by. If the duty of the Saint is not made sufficiently clear, seek further light. Do not stop short of solution. Then, when a clear understanding is reached, why hesitate? the opportunity is at your door to render complete obedience to the requirements of the law. The Stake Bishopric are ready to perform their part.

We now proceed to give the steps to be taken in honoring the law which constitutes Saints legal heirs. "If you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you."—Doctrine and Covenants 77:1.

All Saints, rich and poor, priesthood and membership, are required under the law to make complete consecration of properties. The Lord has called and set apart certain ones to receive these consecrations and to see that all are amply provided (Doctrine and Covenants 42:8, 9, 10). To aid in this matter an inventory blank is furnished each, upon which is to be stated a true and complete account of all properties held, as well as indebtedness and other matters which go to make up a complete showing. This statement is to be filed with the Stake Bishopric.

Such filing calls for action on the part of the bishopric. After the Lord has been honored with the tenth, through mutual consent of the bishopric and the ones who are going to make the consecration, the just needs are ascertained, surplus property determined, stewardships designated, thus effecting a complete consecration and entitling the Saint to a written statement from the bishopric, certifying to the fact that the law has been honored and duty performed.

If you have recently filed your inventory with the Stake Bishopric that will suffice, but if the conditions are materially changed, please make the account up-to-date. Also, if you have filed inventory elsewhere and are members of Lamoni Stake, it would aid our work if you would furnish us with a duplicate copy. Our purpose in making this request is that the work of the bishopric may be better organized, and to facilitate carrying out the law.

*The act of consecrating does not cease, but is continuous.* We become stewards, and as such are responsible in time and eternity, each steward to render an account. Every Saint entering upon the work of consecration will receive a suitable report blank, upon which to report the condition of his or her property holdings from time to time, as deemed necessary. This information will be carefully filed in the office of the Stake Bishopric, and becomes church property, to be used only by the proper church authorities in their legitimate work.

Should any of the Saints throughout the stake fail to receive a copy of this booklet the failure is not intentional. Let your wants be known and one will be furnished you.

Whatever service the Stake Bishopric may be to the Saints in securing a better understanding of the financial law of the church on the part of all earnestly concerned, they are at your service to render assistance.



