

OFFICE OF
The First Presidency
of the
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints.

67 East South Temple St.

Salt Lake City, Utah, January 31st, 1914.

To Presidents of Stakes and Counselors,

Dear Brethren:-

Having reason to believe that some members of the Church are secretly engaged advising and encouraging others to enter into unauthorized and unlawful marriages, we have deemed it advisable to call your attention to the communication we addressed to you on this subject on the 5th of October, 1910, a copy of which is herewith appended.

And believing, as we do, that these people are at the bottom of all the violations referred to in our communication, we direct your special attention to them, with a request that any information received by you from time to time relating to cases of this character, be followed up and investigated with a view to having this class of offenders placed on trial for their fellowship in the Church, as we regard them equally culpable with actual offenders. Please make the same request of your Bishops.

Your brethren,

Joseph F. Smith
Anthony H. Lund
Charles W. Penrose

First Presidency

October 5th, 1910.

Presidentand Counselors,

.....Stake.

DEAR BRETHREN:

We deem it advisable to address a letter to you and to each of the Stake Presidencies in regard to a matter which is causing us much anxiety.

You will recall that at the general conference of April, 1904, President Joseph F. Smith made the following statement, afterwards published, defining the attitude of the Church in regard to plural marriages:

"Inasmuch as there are numerous reports in circulation that plural marriages have been entered into contrary to the official declaration of President Woodruff of September 26th, 1890, commonly called the manifesto, which was issued by President Woodruff and adopted by the Church at its General Conference, October 6th, 1890, which forbade any marriage violative of the law of the land, I, Joseph F. Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, do hereby affirm and declare that no such marriages have been solemnized with the sanction, consent, or knowledge of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and

I hereby announce that all such marriages are prohibited, and if any officer or member of the Church shall assume to solemnize or enter into any such marriage he will be deemed in transgression against the Church and will be liable to be dealt with according to the rules and regulations thereof and excommunicated therefrom."

And thereupon the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That we, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in general conference assembled, hereby approve and endorse the statement and declaration of President Joseph F. Smith, just made to this conference concerning plural marriages and will support the courts of the Church in the enforcement thereof."

After the Church had spoken thus plainly, we took it for granted that none of its members would be found disobeying its voice. But in the face of this action, emphasized repeatedly in private and public by us, and by the Apostles as well, we now find that some person or persons have assumed authority to solemnize plural marriages, and that men and women have entered into polygamous relations through having been married under such pretended authority.

Some of the violators of this official action of the Church have been tried on their fellowship, and have been excommunicated. But there are rumors afloat (and some of these rumors appear to be well founded) that there are still others equally guilty, and it is to such cases that we desire to direct your attention. It is a matter of deep regret that men professing membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should disregard the commands of the Church, and by doing so value their standing in it so lightly as to lay themselves liable to be excommunicated. Nevertheless it becomes our duty to request you to instruct each Bishop in your Stake to carry out the provisions of the foregoing resolution by dealing with offenders, if any there be in his ward, in accordance therewith.

We also desire you to make it known to all the Saints in your stake that no one has been authorized to solemnize plural marriages, and that he who advises, counsels or entices any person to contract a plural marriage renders himself liable to excommunication, as well as those who solemnize such marriages, or those who enter into such unlawful relations.

Needless as it may appear, we wish to assure you that the attitude of the Church is the same today as when the foregoing resolution was adopted, and we hold that anyone violating this important rule and action not only commits an individual transgression, but dishonors the Church as well. We therefore enjoin upon you to see to it that all such offenders are subjected to the discipline of the Church in the regular way.

Your Brethren,

JOSEPH F. SMITH,
ANTHON H. LUND,
JOHN HENRY SMITH,
First Presidency.