

parents who are inclined to backbite, to deceive, to defraud, to be hypocritical in regard to any principle of the Gospel? If we would have the rising generation grow up in faith, it is imperatively necessary that we should manifest our faith by our works.

If there is infidelity in the midst of the Latter-day Saints, and in the young, the older people are measurably responsible for that infidelity. If the children can discover from the very earliest moments that the older people among the Latter-day Saints are consistent and honest, and can discover in their lives that they love the principles they profess, and they live by them, it makes them happy, it makes them honorable, it makes them respectable, and they recognize that their parents, in their lives, are better than the infidel, better than people of other denominations; they find that their fathers and mothers have greater faith, greater influence with God; their prayers are answered, and they begin in early life to taste also of the good spirit of the Lord and appreciate its blessings, following measurably in the footsteps of their parents.

How satisfactory it will be for parents to discover their children thus following in their wake; to find their sons and daughters filled with faith. But if there is apathy in the parents, or in the older people in the midst of the Latter-day Saints, if there is a neglect of duty, then children become sceptical. They cannot believe that the older people are honest and conscientious, because they do not live according to their profession. If children discover their parents are neglectful today in regard to the work of the Lord, the purposes of the Almighty, the kingdom which the Lord has established—if children discover, I say, a lack of faith in their parents, or doubt, or misgiving, can we hope to see the children very firm in the faith? Why no. If a man would establish his own family, his own children, in the faith, he himself must be a consistent practitioner of that faith.

Children have good sense; people generally have some good sense, some good judgment, and they have the faculty of weighing one another—taking measure and stock of one another. They come to this ability quite early in life; and if we have the Gospel as we profess, as we have borne testimony through all these years, it will be profitable to us to honor that Gospel, and to honor God

by living according to the requirements of the Gospel. We have been taught from the beginning that it is important for every Latter-day Saint to have the testimony of Jesus, the spirit of prophecy, abiding in his heart. Every individual man, every individual woman, should have the spirit of the Lord abiding in his or her heart—should know for themselves what the Gospel really is. They should not depend upon the presence of Bishops, Elders, Presidents, or Apostles, but should themselves be able to stand by the support of the Lord. Whether these officers are present or not to labor with them, they ought to be able to stand together for a number of years.

During the experience the Church has had in the last few years many of the chief brethren have been out of the way; they have not been easily reached. Their voices have not been frequently heard amongst the people, and in their meetings to a degree, there has grown a kind of coldness, a spirit of lassitude among the Latter-day Saints. This ought not to be, and it betokens a weakness in the faith of the people where such is the case. They should be more enthusiastic and faithful to local ministers; the lesser Priesthood and all the servants of the Lord who have the privilege of being at home should be more industrious and faithful in the absence of their seniors, so that the Church shall not suffer. It ought not to suffer. The Lord has so ordained that in every Ward, in every Stake, and in every department of the kingdom at home and abroad, the Melchisedek Priesthood shall preside. There is not a branch of the Church, perhaps in the world today without a Priest, or a man bearing the Priesthood of Melchisedek standing at its head. There is not a family in the Church—if the families are organized as they should be—without an Elder, a man bearing the Melchisedek Priesthood standing at the head; a man who is entitled to approach the Lord and to receive revelations through the inspiration of the Almighty in regard to the duties which devolve upon him as the president of a family, a Ward, a Stake, or a quorum, or to receive the word of God in regard to his own or another's life, and to know whether he is in the path of duty and safety. The Lord has thus provided, and made us a nation of ministers—ministers of righteousness.

Suppose that during these four years that have last passed—because

I was not able to meet with the Latter-day Saints in this Tabernacle and in other places, and was not allowed to partake of the sacrament—I had grown callous and careless, and neglected my prayers, duties, and obligations, and refused to speak when the opportunity offered; suppose that I had refused to write when the opportunity offered, to answer questions or to give instruction because I was not allowed to minister in public as I was wont to do in former times; suppose I had concluded that I would do nothing now for the next four years; that I would not give counsel, exhort, or teach the people when the opportunity offered in private or in public. If I had taken such a course I would have been condemned. The brothers and sisters who have taken to that sort of course during the last four years are "condemned already," and the fruit of their carelessness and of their indifference, will be made manifest in due time. Generally, when trouble comes upon the Latter-day Saints, either as a community or as individuals, they seek to come closer to the Lord, and that is what they ought to do. Perhaps they ought to live closer to Him when there are no troubles, but whether there are troubles and dangers or not, certainly they ought to approach the Lord. They ought to pray with greater fervency—they ought to fast and pray. They ought to testify and seek the counsel of the Almighty and not neglect the gift which God gave to them when they were baptized; but they should cultivate it, and it should grow stronger in them, so that out of every difficulty we may become stronger, just as men who go on a mission, return stronger in the faith than when they started.

Now, the Latter-day Saints who have kept the commandments of God will come out of their trials and persecutions with greater faith when the clouds pass away than they had when the clouds gathered around them. In times of darkness and peril, and the threatenings of the powers of evil, we ought to live the closer together. There ought not to be division, schism, carelessness nor indifference on the part of the people; but every man and woman should be more energetic and faithful to the Lord than they have been in times of peace. Generally this is the case.

How about the Latter-day Saints, during the last four years? What progress have they made? What advancement individually, spiritual-