

entirely withdrawn itself. This man, so favored of heaven, who had testified time and again to the truth of this work, and had preached it in power, was left in this condition. But he could recall the joy that he had had. He may have felt that then was a time of ignorance; but, ignorant though he was at that time, according to his own idea, the joy that he had he could not forget, and he said he would give his right hand if he could experience it once again. That was the result of transgression—transgression so plain and palpable that all who knew him were satisfied what the results would be. They knew he would go down unless he repented thoroughly and sincerely.

We have compared the word of God to a seed. We can also compare wrongdoing to a seed. The seeds of wrongdoing are sown in the human heart. If there is not care taken to uproot these seeds, they also will grow; and it permitted to go on unchecked, if nourished and cherished, they will increase and become strong, and they will bring forth fruit also—the fruit of evil. My brethren and sisters, how shall we prevent the growth of this evil seed? How shall we cherish the growth of this good seed? I have spoken to you about prayer. Prayer, coupled with repentance, is one of the means of doing this. God extends His arms of mercy and loving kindness to all His children, and beseeches them to turn to Him and repent of their sins. Our sins may be as scarlet, but if we will repent of them He will make them white as wool. No matter what our sins may be, save the unpardonable sin, if we will repent of them with all our hearts and confess them in humility before God, and make atonement for them to the extent of our ability, He will forgive them. Be comforted, then, all ye penitent sinners! Be comforted, all ye people; for there is none of us but has committed sin. We are all offenders in the sight of God's exalted purity. There is no human being that treads the earth that is not a sinner. One therefore cannot reproach the other. Not one of us can look upon his brother, and say, "He is a sinner, and I am not." The man that looks upon his brother as a sinner and himself as without sin, is self-righteous, and he may know that that feeling is not of God. We can then be comforted in the reflection that if we will confess our sins and repent of them, He will forgive them. If we will pray unto God continually to show unto us our weaknesses and shortcomings by the light of His Holy Spirit, we then may hope that we will be able to persevere until the end of our lives. I can say for the encouragement of all who are struggling that God is very, very merciful. He is willing to forgive all who come unto Him in humility. All who will ask Him for light, He will give light. All who ask Him for strength, He will give strength. All who ask Him for peace, He will give peace. All who ask Him for joy and happiness of soul, to them He will give these blessings. None will go away unsatisfied. This is the way to preserve ourselves in the truth, so that we can walk without deviation in the straight and narrow path that leadeth unto God. The humblest can do it. The most ignorant can do it. The child can do it. It is not for the wise alone. It is not alone for those who have experience. It is not alone for those who have talent. Every soul can do it, no

matter how unlearned or how weak that soul may be. And unless we do this, my brethren and sisters, there is no guarantee for any man in this Church, no matter how great his office may be, that he will be faithful to the end unless he keeps the commandments of God, so that God will be with him. I believe, however, there are men that have obtained such faith with God that He would not allow them to go astray; He would take their lives from the earth before He would suffer it. As our beloved President has often said to us himself, the Lord would not permit him to do anything that would lead this people wrong. I believe that with all my heart. I suppose there are thousands of the Latter-day Saints whose constant prayer unto the Lord is that their lives may be taken from the earth rather than that they should be unfaithful to the covenants which they have made with God. I believe that in every faithful soul that feeling exists. The Latter-day Saints never want to lose their testimony concerning this Gospel; they never want to get into the dark; they would rather die than lose their faith and the promises which God has made unto them. But it is far better for us to live. God does not want us to die until we have filled our missions. He does not want to take us away to prevent us from apostatizing. Better to stay here and battle with sin, and show our integrity and faithfulness to the very last moment of our existence, than have to be taken off to save us. Of course, this is far better than to live and deny the faith; but the best thing is to live and keep the commandments of God, enjoying the fellowship and communion of the Holy Ghost all our days. This is the better course for us to take, and by our faithfulness set an example to, our children and to everybody else; for example is far better than precept. It is men's lives that have the greatest effect upon those who surround them. Every man and woman in this church should be a good example, so that those that come in contact with them will feel better because of it; they will feel purified by their example and by their words; they will feel strengthened in their faith by seeing their good works. And this will bring true happiness to all—such happiness that they cannot experience in any other way.

The words of Alma were written some ninety years before the birth of the Savior, but they are true and applicable today. Men wonder how it is that we know the Book of Mormon is true. Why, the evidence is within itself. When Alma tells these things, he tells us that which we know ourselves; and we know that no human being could tell it unless he had had experience. We have proved it ourselves, and we know that it is true. So it is with other teachings in the Book of Mormon. We know by our personal experience that they are true. In addition to this, we know by the testimony of the Spirit of God that this is a true work, and that it came from God. But who could write these words that I have read in your hearing unless he had experience in the things of God. We know that they are true. I will warrant you that there is not a soul in this house, who has been faithful to the truth, that cannot bear testimony that these words which Alma speaks concerning the word of God and the results that follow its reception are true. They have proved them to be true in their own experience. We ourselves are liv-

ing witnesses of their truth. Thus it is that the testimony of men in all ages is alike. The Spirit of God produced that effect in the days of Adam, Abel and Seth, and the righteous descendants of Adam had that experience. Abraham and Moses afterwards had it, as did Elijah and Elisha and the other prophets. It was the same in the days of the Savior. It is the concurrent testimony of the righteous men of all ages. They all testify to the same grand truth.

If there are any in this congregation who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and who have been guilty of any sin, let me exhort you this afternoon, as you love your soul, and as you desire the favor and the salvation of God, repent of your sins. Every one of us should do this, not only today, but every day. This is the voice of God to us. Repent of your sins, ye Latter-day Saints. Turn away from your iniquities. Put everything that is sinful far from you. Be humble. Do not set up your own will, but be governed by the will of God. Examine yourselves in the light of the Spirit of God. Go unto Him in your secret places. Call upon Him fervently and mightily, in the name of Jesus, to give you His Holy Spirit, that you may see yourselves in the light thereof; and that seeing yourselves, you may repent of that which is offensive in His sight. Let no seed of bitterness, no seed of wrongdoing, no seed of evil lodge in your hearts and germinate there to bring forth a crop of bitter fruit, resulting in destruction. This is the course for every one to take, and I testify to you, as a servant of God, that if you will humble yourselves in this manner, God will pour out His Holy Spirit upon you in power. Your souls will be cleansed by that power. You will be sanctified and renovated and made anew, as it were, and you will feel the power of God, and can testify concerning it, and then you will feel as though you could forgive the whole world. If any of your brethren and sisters have wronged you, you will feel to forgive them with all your heart. For I tell you when men and women get the Spirit of God on them, if they have done wrong to a brother, they will repent of it. If any have offended me in any manner, all I ask is that God will pour out His Holy Spirit upon them. That is all the revenge I want. For I know that if God will pour out His Spirit upon them, if they have done me wrong they will see it, and if I have done wrong, I will see it, and I will feel to make that wrong right. Therefore, we are commanded to pray for our enemies and those that spitefully use us. Why? Because if we pray for them, and they get the Spirit of God, they will repent of the wrong they have done and make it right. We should cherish love for the human family; for God is love. He is a loving Father, and we should love, and not hate. Hatred is antagonistic to the Spirit of God, and it cannot reign in the heart where the Spirit of God is. It is love that will conquer, it is love that will win. It is by love that God draws His children to Him, and it is by love that we will draw people to us; not by hatred and not by seeking to retaliate. If you feel prompted to retaliate, or as men say, "get even," you may know that that spirit is not of God; that feeling is not one of the fruits of the Spirit of God.

We are engaged in the greatest work.