

tend, you could not find the least distinction between the men who have been on missions and the men who have not. God abundantly blesses His servants when they return. He multiplies His temporal blessings upon them. They are prospered in their lands; they are prospered in their families; they are prospered in their flocks; and in all their operations and labors prosperity attends them. Thus God witnesses unto His people that He is able to reward His servants and all those who put their trust in Him and serve Him.

What does this show to us? It shows that if we will give our hearts to God; if we devote ourselves to His service and be obedient to Him, we will be blessed and prospered as no other people upon the earth have been. I might extend this still further and allude to those who have been liberal in their donations to the poor, who have fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and who have been strict in paying their tithing, and ask this congregation what have been the results to those who have done right in these directions, and who have kept the commandments of God? Have they not, in every instance, been prospered, at least equal with those who have not done these things? I am sure that your testimony would be that they have been prospered more than those who have been stingy and niggardly and neglectful of their duties in these directions. In this way, brethren and sisters, God is bearing testimony to us concerning His work and the results of obedience to His commands. And if we carry out His requirements in our lives, the blessings of the Most High will rest upon us in every direction. In the words of the Apostle John, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." God designs to make us like Him. It is for this purpose that He sent us here. It is for this purpose that we have been chosen out of the world and that the Gospel has been revealed. God wants His children to be like Himself, and in saying this I do not mean in a spiritualized sense alone. There are many people who imagine that we are the children of God because He is our Creator. But we differ from all other people in this respect. We believe that we are the literal descendants of our Eternal Father; that we are the offspring of Deity; that those aspirations which man has, and which cause Him to perform the mighty works that we see on every hand as we travel throughout the earth, are inherited from our Eternal Father. They come to us by descent, or, to use another phrase, they are hereditary. The doctrine of heredity is manifested in the works of man. We descend from this great Father who formed the earth, and

who governs this universe. Therefore, it is natural that man, being His offspring, should have these glorious aspirations which prompt him to attempt these wonderful works and to succeed in carrying them out.

This is the belief of the Latter-day Saints; and, having this belief, we should have with it a corresponding desire that, when we shall see our Father, we shall be like Him. If we have this hope within us, we will seek to purify ourselves, even as He is pure, that we may be counted worthy to come into His presence.

I remember listening a short time ago to a discourse delivered by Elder Penrose from this stand, in which he alluded to the doctrine that some taught concerning every people having a God to suit themselves. I believe it has been remarked by a noted infidel—but it is an old idea—that every people form in their own minds an idea of the kind of God they want to worship. They clothe him with the attributes and perfections which they admire and think worthy of worship. The Indian has his idea of God; the Hindoo has his, and all the various nations of the earth have their different ideas of God; each one adopting the God that agrees with its standard. There is, no doubt, something correct in this. We worship that which we admire, and everything that is admirable pertains to God. Even with our light and intelligence we may not comprehend all the attributes of God, and certainly we cannot comprehend His greatness. But we have certain ideas of His character, and others may have their ideas, and may be correct to a certain extent, just as the Gospel is believed in, in part, by various peoples. You will find truth in every land, among every people, in every form of worship. You will find it among the Pagans. I have found it among the most ignorant people. And I suppose that if a man were to travel over the whole world and mingle with the lowest human species, he would find some remnants of truth; something that would be admirable; something that he could say was good and true. Of course, as men advance they receive more truth. This is the prerogative of those who have embraced the Gospel of the Son of God. This is the great distinction between us and other peoples. We believe in a God of revelation. We believe in a God who communicates His mind and will to His children. And if we seek for it we believe that He will reveal Himself more and more unto us, and in greater and greater fulness, until we shall comprehend Him as well as it is possible for mortal man to comprehend God. We do not worship a Being that we have created in our own imaginations; we worship a Being who has revealed Himself to us—a Being who has communicated to us

His character and His attributes, and revealed unto us the greatness of His Godlike character. It was necessary in the very outset of this work that there should be a revelation of this character. Up to that time, men for generations had been ignorant of the character of God. It was believed, as many now believe, that He was a Being diffused through space—a spiritual being, without an entity or without a tabernacle. But the first revelation that was given in our day, in answer to the prayer of the boy, Joseph Smith, Jun., and seemingly the most necessary one that could be given to lay the foundation of faith in the human mind, was the appearance of God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ.

I have heard that there are some among us who contend that Jesus is the Father, and that there is but one Father, misrepresenting and misinterpreting the words of divine revelation contained in the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the book of Doctrine and Covenants. This is a fallacy and a false doctrine. There were two personages appeared unto Joseph Smith, Jun.—God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. Whatever errors had existed, whatever doubts had prevailed up to that time concerning the being of God were swept away, never to return, from the minds of those who believed in that revelation at that time. God was then understood to be the Being who walked in the Garden of Eden and spoke with a voice; whose finger was seen by the brother of Jared, and whom the prophets declared to be the Being that He is. This testimony came with power on this occasion. Therefore, we are not in the position that infidels assert that other peoples are. The infidel asserts that they who worship any being as supreme worship a being of their own creation. We do not do this; for, as I have said, in the very outset of this work the Father and the Son were revealed in ineffable glory, and they were seen by mortal man, and his testimony stands on record today, corroborated and sustained by the testimony of others who have since seen the Lord Jesus Christ, and who are living witnesses that He lives, and that He is indeed the Son of God, and one of the two personages that form the Godhead. In this respect, as I have said, we differ from other creeds and peoples, and our faith has a firm foundation. It furnished unto those who believed a foundation for their faith, and they exercised that faith until it developed into knowledge. Among the Latter-day Saints there is a knowledge concerning the personage of God. We have some conception of Him. We know that He is a Being of tabernacle. A remark suggests itself to my mind which I heard a few days ago from one of our