

Elders to go and preach the Gospel, they could travel with perfect safety. Many persons were at this time investigating. The labors of the missionaries in the South Carolina conference, during the past year, had been almost exclusively in new fields. A year ago there were only six Elders in that conference; today there were twelve, and there seemed to be work for more. He was thankful that he had been accounted worthy to go forth as a messenger of the Gospel, for he knew that the work in which they were engaged was the work of the Lord.

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was also called upon to speak. He commenced by referring to the sending forth of the Elders to the different nations of the earth, to warn the people of the judgments to come, and said it appeared to him that the disinterested labors of these men should be a witness to this generation that there was something more in what the world called "Mormonism" than it was given credit for. When young men who were not accustomed to public speaking, not acquainted with the world nor its ways, were ready at a moment's notice, as it were, to leave their homes and go out to the world, trusting in God, to lift their voices and proclaim the Gospel without fee, reward or any kind of pay, it seemed to him that the people should reflect, and might reasonably come to the conclusion that there must be some power or influence behind these Elders more than was generally understood.

Why should they be willing to do this—to leave their employment, their homes, and go out among a people with whom they were not acquainted, and attempt a task for which they had not been trained or prepared, unless there was some power prompting them more than mortal? Where could there be found any other men, even if trained to be public speakers, ministers of the gospel, willing to do this—to go among people whose language even they did not understand and without salary labor by faith and study so as to be able to preach to them in their own native tongue the things of God? There was something very remarkable about this, though it was common enough to the Latter-day Saints. They had been acquainted with these things for a great many years and felt that any man who was called to be an Elder in the Church or, if not an Elder, a member of it—if called by those in authority to receive the Priesthood and go out to the world to preach the Gospel, that it was his duty to do this, and if he failed to respond he would feel disgraced in his own eyes if a true Latter-day Saint.

The Latter-day Saints were called of God to be a witness to this generation that these were the last days—that God had restored to the earth the everlasting Gospel which was preached in ancient times, the same Gospel as was taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles in the first century of the Christian era. The Latter-day Saints were called to a special mission. When they received the Gospel in the first instance they were told that it was the duty of every man who was warned to warn his

neighbor; so that the duty of spreading the Gospel rested upon the whole Church, upon the members as well as those who were called to occupy official positions therein. Of course the Twelve Apostles were called to be special witnesses of Christ in all the world, and the duty rested upon them of carrying or sending the Gospel to all nations, until every nation, kindred, tongue and people upon the face of the earth had been made acquainted with it, or the opportunity had been put in their way to receive it. In connection with the Apostles were the quorums of Seventies. These were also, under the direction of the Apostles, to go to all the world, whenever called upon, and carry the Gospel. It was the duty of every man who held the office of Seventy to be ready whenever required to go here, there, or anywhere on the face of this broad earth, making secondary all his personal affairs. Further, there was a duty likewise resting upon every person baptized into this Church to assist in spreading abroad the truth until all people had an opportunity of hearing it.

The command was just as much to the female as to the male; all the members of the Church were required to do their part in warning the world as far as their opportunities lie, to bear their testimony where they could. It was not required of them to try and force anybody to listen to or believe what they had to say; but the opportunity must be given; and the special mission of the Latter-day Saints was to afford everybody living on the earth the chance of receiving the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity.

There were a great many ministers to religion and a great many different religious denominations, and all of them had some principles of truth to communicate. He had nothing to say against those religious denominations or their tenets. The Elders of this Church were not required to abuse or contend with anybody. This was not the office of the Latter-day Saints, but they were called upon to present the truth as revealed by the Lord. In those various religions there were a great many truths, but a great many errors also, and when the Saints presented the truth it naturally came in contact with the errors that exist in the world; and when truth and error came together it was like Greek meeting Greek—"then comes the tug of war." It was usually the case that when people were in error and clung to their errors they were greatly incensed when the truth was presented to them.

People were prone to cling to the traditions of their forefathers, to that which they had been taught in their childhood, no matter how false or how absurd it might be. And so when the servants of God went to the world to publish the Gospel of peace, they generally stirred up strife. The real object of the truth was to establish peace, goodwill, harmony, kindness, brotherly love, charity, everything that made people happy, united and harmonious, and prepared them for a higher state of being; but when the truth was introduced it came in contact with error, and there must be a conflict till the truth was crushed to earth—that it might rise again at some time or other, or error

was overcome and banished. As Latter-day Saints they thanked God that they had the encouragement given to them from their Heavenly Father that this time the truth would not be crushed, that the Gospel introduced by revelation from heaven would not be obliterated or driven again from the earth, that the authority of the holy Priesthood which God had restored should not be taken away again.

The work which the Latter-day Saints were called upon to perform was a very great one, and they should all feel that they were called to be missionaries in their respective places. If they were not required to go out to the world, they could at least help those who had to go; they could scatter the printed word, send out tracts, pamphlets, and newspapers containing principles which were true; they could strengthen and build up those who were out in the mission field; they could look after the wants of their families while they were absent; indeed, it would be a disgrace and a shame for any ward or neighborhood in this Church in Zion to allow any family to suffer for lack of the necessaries of life while the husband, father or brother, as the case might be, was absent from home preaching the Gospel to the world without purse or scrip.

When we came across those not of our own faith, but who were willing to listen to our testimony, we should always be ready, as were the Elders, to bear testimony to that which we know. They should speak only, however, on the simple things that they understood; because if they tried to tell somebody else what they themselves did not understand they would assuredly make a mess of it, like the ministers of the world when they endeavored to explain what God is. Declaring that He is incomprehensible they attempted to describe His being and powers, and therefore signally failed. The Saints should take warning by this folly. They were called to be Gospel preachers, to let their light so shine that its illumination should spread into every part of the earth, till darkness was dispelled, error rooted out, till all nations were subdued unto the Lord, until Satan was bound and his reign was over.

In most parts of the United States people were entirely ignorant in regard to the faith of the Latter-day Saints. Most of the editors of the public journals, religious and otherwise, knew nothing about "Mormonism" beyond the exaggerations and misrepresentations of its opponents. "Mormonism," as it was commonly called, is, in reality, the identical Gospel which Jesus Christ came to preach when on the earth, exactly the same that the Apostles were sent out by Him to preach to all the world. But they stirred up strife and opposition, they were everywhere spoken against, were misunderstood, beaten with many stripes, thrown into prison, deprived of their property, and their names were cast out as evil; they accomplished, nevertheless, what they were commissioned to do as far as they could, bearing testimony, bringing people to a knowledge of the truth, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, laying hands upon them that they might receive the