

what would be our fate. I know, though, what has been in the past. Joseph, through false brethren, had his life taken from him. Those nearest to him betrayed him in the days of which President Woodruff has spoken; and at the very last those who were nearest to him were among the men who were the means of bringing him to his death. Now, how is it with the First Presidency? Do we have a mind of our own? Those who know us can judge of this. It is our duty to make our thoughts known upon every subject. But we should not be hard in our hearts; we should be soft and tender, so that the Spirit of God will influence us. It does not do for us to be opinionated and set in our feelings, and think that our view is the correct view; but to hold our hearts open to receive the manifestations of the Spirit of God. I suppose each one of us is fond of having his own way. I know I am. I am willing to confess that I like to have my own way. But I do not like my own way well enough to want it in opposition to my brethren's way. That is our duty as the First Presidency of the Church. It is the duty of every presidency throughout the Church. The Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors, the Bishops and their Counselors, and all who act in presiding positions, should be united. It is our duty as the First Presidency of the Church to seek for this spirit of union for which the Savior prayed, and to be one; to bring our feelings in subjection, and when two agree on a thing, and the third cannot see it, let him say, "I am going with you. No feeling that enters into my heart shall stand between you and me." Suppose that one man has more wisdom than another; it is better to carry out a plan that is not so wise, if you are united on it. Speaking generally, a plan or a policy that may be inferior in some respects is more effective, if men are united upon it, than a better plan would be upon which they were divided. But some may ask, where comes in the inspiration of God in such cases as this? We should understand that God uses men as instruments in carrying out His purposes. He uses them according to their capacity. He gives them opportunity to exercise their agency and to work out self-development. The Lord gave to the children of Israel, after leaving Egypt, what is called the law of carnal commandments. It was admittedly an inferior law to that which He desired them to have; yet it came from the Lord. He inspired His servant Moses to do that for the people because they were not prepared to receive and put in practice higher truths and live up to higher laws.

The First Presidency ought to have in the first place their hearts single to the glory of God; to have no personal feeling that will influence them in any policy, but have their motives pure, and then when they unite on anything and give any counsel, I tell you that God will sustain that and carry it through; He will supplement it by His wisdom and power, and make it effective. For the First Presidency are but mortal men. We can only see a certain distance. God sees to the utmost limit. There are no bounds to His sight. But there are bounds to ours. Does He require superhuman wisdom of us? No, only as He gives it to us. He points out the path, and if our motives are pure and we are united on any plan or policy, He will bless and sanctify that, and He will

make it successful. That constitutes the strength of the First Presidency, their unity and the purity of their motives. They may err—and who does not? As I said, we are fallible men. Whatever my views may be concerning the Church and its infallibility, I suppose there are none of the officers of the Church who claim infallibility. Certainly, I do not claim it for myself. But when we are united, our motives pure, and we divest ourselves of every personal desire and bias, and ask God to take away all hardness from our hearts and all blindness from our minds, and then supplicate Him for His blessing, it will surely come. Then the Twelve Apostles and the other officers of the Church, when they carry that counsel out unitedly and in the same spirit, will be blessed, and the Church will be blessed, and, as I have said, God will supplement our weakness by His strength, and our want of knowledge by His infinite knowledge and His great power.

In this way the Church of Christ has always been led. Occasionally men arise who tower above the multitude in the extent of their knowledge, such as the Prophet Joseph, and others whose names I need not mention; for as the Lord revealed to Abraham, there are differences in spirits. He spoke of the Kokaubeam, or the stars, and of the difference manifest in them; that one star was greater and brighter than another, until Kolob was reached, which is near the throne of the Eternal; and He said it was so with the spirits of men. There are differences in spirits. There are different grades of intelligence among the spirits of men. We are not all on a dead level. But God sends forth occasionally a man that towers like a giant in the midst of his fellow men. The Prophet Joseph was of that kind. There have been innumerable examples of men not of our Church of that kind, whose knowledge, foresight and intelligence were so far ahead of their contemporaries and those who lived contemporaneously with them that they could not come up to them. This Church could not come up to Joseph. He towered above us. He would have revealed things to us, if we had been prepared, that would have been far greater than those that we have received. But the Lord deals with His children mercifully. He gives them intelligence according to their capacity to receive it. Therefore wise men, such as Joseph and others, give the counsel that is adapted to the conditions and circumstances of the people, though they may see that it is not exactly what ought to be. Better to give the people something they will obey, if it is not the fullness of the law of God; better to lead them on until their capacity is enlarged and they are prepared to receive higher principles and truths. That is the way God has done with His people. There are many things that the leading men of this Church can see and understand that they cannot impart to the people, nor ask the people to do them. Why? Because they know that the people would not come up to the requirement, and that therefore they would be disobedient. Better to give them line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, than to give them something that they could not receive and that they would rebel against. That is the manner in which the Lord deals with His children,

and it is the manner in which wise men inspired of the Lord deal with their fellow men. Speaking as a First Presidency, if we could have our way, there are many changes that we would make; but you know how difficult it is to have people see alike upon many points.

Now, if the First Presidency are in the condition that I have heretofore referred to, God is with them, and He will sustain them. I do not think you can find three men—at least, I do not know of any three men who feel a greater sense of their unworthiness for the position they are called to fill than the three Presidents of the Church. The First President you know, and you know the feeling that he has. Respecting President Smith and myself, I know that we have both been overpowered by the sense of our own weakness. God knows I never would have stood in this position if I could have had my way. I have acted only because it was God's will that I should act. I may not seem that way in the sight of my brethren. I do not think I do. Possibly my brethren do not think I feel as I do, because it is natural for me, if there is anything to do, to go at it energetically; but I feel as though it required all the power that God can give to help me to be what I am. I would have no connection with this office, I would not touch it, if I did not know that it was the will of God that I should act in this position. And I know this is the feeling of President Woodruff. I know it is the feeling of President Smith. I know it is the feeling of the Twelve and of the Elders generally. When the Spirit of God comes upon us we feel our unworthiness, and that nothing but God's power and blessing can sustain us in bearing up under this great responsibility which He has placed upon us.

My brethren and sisters, I speak of union. The First Presidency must be united. The Twelve must be united; not among themselves alone, but with the First Presidency. They must see eye to eye with the First Presidency. They should come and ask counsel of the First Presidency. And as was said by President Joseph F. Smith this morning, when men do things in secret and are not willing to bring that which they have into the light of day, there is always cause for fear. We should have our hearts open, and be willing for all our brethren to read our hearts and our thoughts. We should enter into no arrangement, nor have any connection with anything that we have to conceal. It is not the Spirit of God that prompts concealment. Nor should we enter into things without being willing to ask counsel respecting them, no matter what they be. It is our duty to ask counsel—to seek the mind and will of God; for God does speak through His servants, and He does give counsel through them unto the people. The Twelve ought to be in this condition. They ought not to shun the society and the counsel of the First Presidency. Do we want this for our self-glorification? The Lord knows we do not. But it is the order of the Church that the Twelve should seek counsel from those whom God has placed to preside. And they should be free in asking counsel, and not do anything without it. In the same manner the Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors should ask counsel; the Bishops and their Counselors should ask counsel; and the seven Presidents of the Seventies, in their place,