

the lightnings of God's wrath poured out for destruction upon Babylon. The cry of the angel unto the righteous of this dispensation is "Come out of her O my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." We believe also in the principle of direct revelation from God to man. This is a part of the Gospel, but it is not peculiar to this dispensation. It is common in all ages and dispensations of the Gospel. The Gospel cannot be administered, nor the church of God continue to exist without it. Christ is the head of his church and not man, and the connection can only be maintained upon the principle of direct and continuous revelation. It is not a hereditary principle, or cannot be handed down from father to son, or from generation to generation, but is a living vital principle to be enjoyed on certain conditions only, namely—through absolute faith in God and obedience to his laws and commandments. The moment this principle is cut off, that moment the church is adrift, being severed from its ever-living head. In this condition it cannot continue, but must cease to be the church of God, and like the ship at sea, without captain, compass or rudder, is at the mercy of the storms and the waves, of ever-contending human passions and worldly interests, pride and folly, finally to be wrecked upon the strand of priestcraft and superstition. The religious world is in this condition to-day, ripening for the great destruction which awaits them; but there is an ark prepared for such as are worthy of eternal life, in the gathering of the saints to the chambers of the Almighty, where they shall be preserved until the indignation of God is passed.

Marriage is also a principle or ordinance of the gospel, most vital to the happiness of mankind, however unimportant it may seem, or lightly regarded by many. There is no superfluous or unnecessary principle in the plan of life, but there is no principle of greater importance or more essential to the happiness of man—not only here, but especially hereafter, than that of marriage. Yet all are necessary. What good would it be to one to be baptized and receive not the Holy Ghost? And suppose he went a little further and received the Holy Ghost, thereby obtaining the testimony of Jesus, and then stopped at that, what good would it do him? None whatever, but would add to his condemnation, for it would be as burying his talent in the earth. To secure the fulness of the blessings, we must receive the fulness of the gospel. Yet men will be judged and rewarded according to their works. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Those who receive a part of the Gospel with light and knowledge to comprehend other principles, and yet do not obey them will come under this law, hence condemnation will be added unto such, and that which they did receive may be taken from them, and added to them who are more worthy.

Obedience is a requirement of heaven, and is therefore a principle of the gospel. Are all required to be obedient? Yes all. What against their will? O, no, not by any means. There is no power given to man, nor means lawful to be used to compel men to obey the will of God, against their wish, except persuasion and good advice, but there is a penalty offered to disobedience, which all must suffer who will not obey the obvious truths or laws of heaven. I believe in the sentiment of the poet:

"Know this, that every soul is free,
To choose his life and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth is given,
That God will force no man to heaven.
He'll call, persuade, direct aright,
Bless him with wisdom, love and light,
In nameless ways to good and kind,
But never force the human mind."

Is it a difficult task to obey the Gospel? No. It is an easy matter to those who possess the spirit of it. Most of this congregation can testify that the Gospel "yoke is easy and the burden is light." Those who have embraced it will be judged according to their works therein, whether they be good or evil. To such as are untrue to their covenants, it may be said by and by, "depart from me." In vain will they plead their former good works, and faith. Why? because the race is not to the swift nor the battle always to the strong, but to him that endures faithful to the end. We

must save ourselves from this untoward generation. It is a continual labor, but the strength of the righteous will be sufficient for their day. Jesus said, "in my Father's house there are many mansions." There is a glory, or mansion, of which the sun is typical, another of which the moon is typical, and still another like unto the stars, and in this latter the condition of its occupants will differ as the stars differ in appearance. Every man will receive according to his works and knowledge. "These are they who are of Paul and Apollos, some of one and some of another, some of Christ, some of John—of Moses, Elias, Isalah and Enoch, but receive not the Gospel nor the testimony of Jesus." Thus impartial justice will be meted out unto all, and none will be lost but the sons of perdition.

Let us treat with candor the religious sentiments of all men, no matter if they differ from ours, or appear to us absurd and foolish. Those who hold them may be as sincere as we are in their convictions. It is well to prove all things, so far as we can, and be sure to hold fast to that which is good, no matter where we find it. Ridicule is not likely to convince a man of his error, or if it does, it may destroy his respect and love for its author, and if he has truth, his victim will most likely spurn it.

I desire to say that my faith in this work is as firm or firmer than ever. My heart is in it and I know truly it is the kingdom of God. These things of which I have been so imperfectly speaking, I know to be the truth—Bible truth, gospel truth, and are essential to the salvation of mankind. I am not deceived in this but know whereof I speak. My religion teaches me to do good; to be at peace with my neighbors, at least not to infringe upon their rights nor trespass upon their property, and even to endure wrongs from them rather than do them wrong, or even demand from the trespasser what I might deem full justice. It teaches me to trust in the justice of the Almighty, and to rest my cause in his hands. It enjoins honesty, sobriety and industry. It forbids profanity, lying, adultery, deceitfulness and vile cunning.

It gives true enlightenment to the mind and exalts the low and debased who will hearken and obey it. The observance of the Gospel will make good men of bad ones, and better men of good ones. It will make good citizens, good fathers, husbands, wives and children, good neighbors, a good people, an enlightened, pure and high minded community, a blessed state and a prosperous nation. Obedience to the Gospel will save the world from sin, abolish war, strife and litigation, and usher in the millennial reign. It will restore the earth to its rightful owner, and prepare it for the inheritance of the just. These are all principles of that same Gospel of Christ, and the effects which will flow from their acceptance and adoption by mankind. Jesus taught them, and on one occasion the people took up stones and were about to stone him for it. When he said, "many good works have I shewed you from my Father, for which of those works do ye stone me?" He had done many good works, taught them many good things and for this they were about to stone him. The Latter-day Saints could with propriety address themselves in like manner to the world, but more especially to our own nation. We have done many good things, have tried to do no harm, have suffered the spoilation of our goods without retaliation, have been driven from place to place. Our prophets and leaders have been slain, and you still persecute us, and are not satisfied. For which of the good works we have done do ye these things? I know they will say "for your good works we do not hate or persecute you, but for your blasphemy, and because you say you are the people of God." This was about what the Jews said to Jesus, but it did not change the fact that he had told them the truth, or that he had done the many good works among them which he did, nor that it was for these they hated and crucified him. What did the Savior or his disciples do to injure mankind? Nothing. But much to benefit them; yet they were hated, persecuted, hunted and destroyed. What have the Latter-day Saints done to injure anybody? absolutely nothing, but a great deal to benefit humanity. I am at the defiance of the

world to prove to the contrary. We have gathered our people by thousands out of poverty and distress from many nations to these valleys where they are now enjoying good homes, the sweets of liberty and plenty. Aside from religion, that is an inestimable blessing to them. But we have also taught them good principles and doctrines, and they are happy, honest, industrious and prosperous.

We have labored diligently to advance in the scale of intelligence. Our schools compare favorably with any in our broad land; our children are as intelligent, and we are the pioneers of true and enlightened civilization in the Western States and Territories. Through our industry and enterprise, cities, towns and villages have sprung up in the wilderness, and the deserts and waste places have been made fruitful and to blossom as the rose. Can there be any wrong in all this? "But," says one, "it is not for this you are persecuted, it is for your religion." What, then, in the name of reason, is there in our religion that we should be persecuted for it? Is it because we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? The Christian world also profess belief in him, and we believe in him as much as they do and a little more. Is it because we believe it is necessary to repent of sin? Certainly we have a right to do this. Is it because we baptize for the remission of sin? Christ commanded it, and laid it down as the law. Then what can it be that so distinguishes us from the people of the world, and that moves their hatred toward us? Is it revelation from God to man? Perhaps so.

Some forty years ago, the great cry against Joseph Smith was "He believes in revelation!" and this was considered a crime. But very soon after, others who were not "Mormons" commenced to have "revelations," and seemingly the stream has so enlarged that to-day the world is full of "revelation." So our belief in revelation is not now considered so much of a crime as formerly, and therefore it can be no longer the object of persecution, for we would have as good a right to persecute them, as they would to persecute us on that score. We do not believe in these "revelations" of the world, no more than they do in ours. We believe them to be bogus, but we are quite willing that others should enjoy their opinions. We believe that while they have rejected the true light, they are found willing and ready to be thus deceived, by false and delusive spirits, just as the prophets have foretold would be the case. (See 1 Tim. 4th Chap., 1 v., and 2 Tim. 3, 1.) The revelations given through Joseph Smith are full of light, knowledge and wisdom, because they emanated from God. What has Spiritualism done for the world? Can it boast of bringing life and immortality to light? I have yet to learn that a single principle has been developed from this source that will save mankind, or exalt them to the presence and glory of God. Yet they have a right to their convictions, and we grant it cordially. We have the same right.

But says one, "You have dodged the main question; it is polygamy that causes all the trouble!"

This is the mind of our enemies generally, yet nothing can be more fallacious; those who assert this only expose their ignorance. The fact is that since the announcement and practice of that principle by this people, their persecutions have been comparatively trivial and harmless to what they were, before it was even known to themselves.

But the plural marriage of the "Mormons" now seems to form one of the strongest pretexts for the bitterness of our enemies, and the thoughtless readily fall into the ranks of the maligners of this principle. Did they ever stop to reflect as to what harm this principle and practice has done? Let me ask the ladies in this vast audience, Have any of you, or do you know of any woman who has been compelled to practice polygamy among this people? Or who has been compelled even to marry at all? I think not. Has plural marriage deprived any woman of a home, of husband or children? Has it promoted immorality or vice? No it has not. Has it sown the seeds of corruption and death among the people? On the contrary it has promoted healthy, robust and vigorous increase, and the laws of life and health. Can the Elders of this church be accused of going to the Gentiles for their wives and daughters? No, for we think we have better ones at home, we have not the least occasion to go abroad. So far as relates to this matter we are independent of the world. We are willing to let them and theirs alone, and mind our own business, while we respectfully request them, also to attend to their own affairs.

The real facts are, the Latter-day Saints have embraced the unpopular doctrines of Jesus Christ have received the keys of the Holy Priesthood—heaven's delegated authority to man, and are not ashamed of the gospel, knowing it to be the power of God unto salvation. Hence the Devil is enraged, and although they will not believe it, this professedly pious, hypocritical and corrupt world are moved with hatred to words, the work and the people of God, instigated by the spirit of him whose servants they are. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

They predict our downfall, but they will not live to see their predictions fulfilled. The wicked may rage and imagine they can successfully measure arms with the Almighty, but he will hold them in derision and laugh when their fear cometh, while the kingdom of God will continue to progress until his purposes are consummated as has been decreed.

It is vain for the world to hope that "Mormonism" will die with President Brigham Young. When the Prophet Joseph Smith was assassinated the press and pulpit universally joined in predicting the end of "Mormonism." But instead of their being any truth in their predictions, "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church," for the church grew as fast as it had ever done before, and it took deeper and firmer root. Men were no longer dependent upon the Prophet, the man of God to guide them; they began to stand upon their own foundation, to seek more earnestly after God themselves, and to know for themselves, and not be dependent upon the voice of man. Hence they grew in faith and in power, the truth sinking deeper into the hearts of the people who remained true to the Lord, and they a comparative handful, have succeeded in building up the church as it exists to-day in these valleys. Are we now going to be scattered to the four winds because one or two distinguished men should pass away? No, the seed has fallen into good ground, and it will germinate and mature; the priesthood itself is still with us, the authority is here, and in obedience to the command of God, we will continue to go forth and organize and establish the kingdom, never more to be thrown down or given to another people, until all is consummated and finished. This is the work of God, and not of man. Man is incompetent to direct and manage it. He will not suffer man to arrogate to himself the honor of doing it. The honor belongs to him and he will take it to himself.

This is my faith in the Gospel. It fills my soul with joy and gratitude to God my heavenly Father, and I desire to increase in the truth, to become better, more faithful and diligent in overcoming every weakness, that I may be worthy to stand in the position I occupy in the church of the living God. This is the way we should all feel; and we should, above all other considerations, be determined to cleave to the gospel, building our faith upon the rock, not upon the arm of flesh. Let us humble ourselves before God, seek unto him continually with prayerful hearts, be diligent in the observance of our covenants, and he will bear us off triumphant over every opposing foe and every power that undertakes to oppose us with him and his cause. This is my testimony, and this is my exhortation to the Latter-day Saints. I pray God to bless his people, and to bless his servant brother Taylor, who stands at the head of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who now preside over the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in all the earth. May the Lord bless him, prolong his life and give him power and wisdom to stand in his place and calling and to magnify the priesthood conferred upon him; may his brethren stand with him in one solid phalanx, united as one man, even as God the Father and Jesus and the heavenly hosts are one, and I tell you the whole people will be united and rejoice in the truth. That God may bless the faithful everywhere and enable them to keep sacred the covenants they have made with him, is my earnest prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

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