

are honest in their hearts and desires, it bears record in their souls. "Light cleaveth unto light and intelligence unto intelligence." We know this by experience. When the servants of God first bore testimony to us, a different impression was produced upon us to any that we had experienced when listening to the preachers of the different sects; it was the effect of truth preached by the power of the living God; it bore testimony to our spirits, and we felt that it was true. We could not explain why; we could not, perhaps, comprehend the change, but we knew that something had come to us different from anything we had ever before received; we felt that it was true; the spirit of God bore record in our souls that it was true; we were born of the word, and we could see that this was the work of God, and therefore could yield willing obedience to the ordinance of baptism for remission of sins by one having authority from God. After we had been baptized we were anxious to have hands laid upon our heads that we might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In using that term, the "gift of the Holy Ghost," we do not mean some particular gift of the Spirit, but the gift of the Spirit itself—the Holy Ghost given unto us as a gift from God. We will find that term, "gift of the Holy Ghost," used in the old Scriptures and in the latter day Scriptures. It is the Holy Ghost itself given unto us as a gift from the Almighty. "Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." The promise is to those who will repent and be baptized for the remission of sins;—they shall receive "the gift of the Holy Ghost." What is it? It is a greater and higher endowment of the same spirit which enlightens every man that comes into the world; a greater power given unto us as an abiding witness, to be a light to our feet and a lamp to our path; as a restraint against sin, to guide us into all truth, to open up the vision of the mind, to bring things past to our remembrance, and to make manifest things to come. It is the spirit of truth that reveals the things of the Father and the Son, proceeding from the presence of the Almighty and the very glory in which He is enrobed, which makes him like unto a consuming fire. If we receive that heavenly gift all are brought into communion with Him; we can understand some thing concerning Him, that we may pattern after Him until we become like Him; for if we are continually guided by that spirit, eventually we will come back to His presence and be able to enjoy the fullness of His glory. And while we remain in the flesh He will not be a stranger to us; we will not walk in the dark like the majority of mankind, but we will be the children of the light, comprehending the truth as it is in Him, and seeing the path in which we should walk.

We, then, heard the word and believed it; faith sprang up in our hearts, and we went forth in faith and were baptized; and when the servants of God who had received their missions from the Almighty, who had been ordained under the hands of Joseph Smith or others whom he had ordained, laid their hands upon our heads we received the gift of the Holy Ghost. What was the nature of the influence that was brought to bear upon us? some physical exhibition of power? No, could anybody perceive that there was a change in us? No, I think not. I know how I felt, I can bear testimony in regard to my own experience, and I think that my experience in this respect is that of others.

When I heard the word I believed it, and rejoiced in it, and I prayed to God fervently—I was but a boy at the time—in the name of His Son Jesus that He would manifest to me whether this was true or not, that I might not be deceived by any cunningly devised fable; that I might not be led astray; that no impostor might have any power over me; but that I might be guided in the steps I was about to take, by the light of God. I prayed earnestly and fervently to my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus, time and time again. Being fully convinced in my heart that this work was true, I applied for baptism; and when I was baptized I received the assurance that my sins were remitted, that I was washed and made spiritually clean and that I came from the water spotless. I could say with the ancient Apostle, "Old things have passed away, behold all

things have become new." I was a new creature; I was born again. A change had been wrought upon me; and my desires were to serve God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. And when hands were laid upon me by the servants of God, and I received the gift of the Holy Ghost, I felt no physical manifestation. I must say, I felt a little disappointed at first, for I had expected some such manifestation, but I did not receive any at that time. What did I experience? I found that my mind was opened, that I had greater light; that something had come upon me by which I could see clearly the things of God; and when I read the scriptures new light dawned upon them. I was brought up to believe in the Bible. I had read it when a child, and committed a great deal of it to memory; and when I received this gift from the Almighty through the laying on of hands, it brought those things that were past to my remembrance; they stood up clearly and in bold relief before me, and I could comprehend something concerning God. I could feel that I was in communion with Him. When I prayed I could realize that my words were heard, that God hearkened and answered. When I prayed for knowledge and understanding concerning the things of God, they were manifested to me. It brought to me that which is called in the scriptures, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." The joy, the peace, the satisfaction that it brought to me could not be described in words. I knew that my Redeemer lived; I knew that I was born again; I knew the Holy Spirit was working in my heart. Truths were manifested to me that I had never heard of or read of, but which I afterwards heard preached by the servants of the Lord; all this was testimony to me that I had received the truth. I make mention of this because I know this to be the experience of others. When I saw the gifts and blessings of the Gospel manifested, it was a renewed testimony to me. When I saw the sick healed, heard people speak in tongues, and then heard others give the interpretation, and afterwards saw the same fulfilled, many times in a wonderful and marvelous manner, all these things were additional testimonies of the divinity of this work. When I was only a boy I was called to leave my home and friends—none of whom had received the Gospel—to go out into the world among strangers, turning my back upon home, and leaving everything to go and preach the Gospel without purse or scrip. I received further evidence of the truth of this work, for a great many things were made manifest to me during my missionary experience. When I baptized people and laid my hands upon them, confirming them members of this Church, they bore testimony that the Holy Ghost came upon them, which bore record to them that God lived, and that this was His work. And when I laid my hands upon the sick they were healed. All these things were additional testimonies to me, and to those who received the word through me.

I refer to this also because this is the experience of so many of the Elders of this Church; and you have the testimony in your hearts that what I say is true. Wherever the servants of God have gone bearing this message, and the people have received it and obeyed the requirements of the Gospel, they have received the Holy Ghost as a gift from on high; and if they have been led by its light it has increased in them day by day, and they are still going on, their light growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. They know that God lives; they know that His existence is not a myth; they know that He is a veritable Being, that He is their Father and their God, ever ready to hear the cry of His children when they are willing to hearken to His counsels; and they know that they are framed and fashioned after His likeness, and that all the functions and attributes of Deity are duplicated in them, that through years of faithfulness and progress in the scale of being and enlightenment, they may develop into the full majesty of His perfections and become like Him.

The Holy Ghost, this greater endowment of that spirit which naturally enlighteneth every man that comes into the world, is conferred upon us through a simple process, the way that God has ordained; and it can come in no other way. If there should be any in this congregation this afternoon who desire to

know God, or if they desire to know themselves, they must take this one course—they can do as they please about it, either to receive or reject it, but if they want the blessing of it, they must seek for it in His way. They cannot get it through man-made systems; God has His own way. He acknowledges not, neither does He recognize the ways of men; but if people will hearken to Him and walk in His ways He will be nigh unto them, and will bear testimony to them in language that they, by the power and gift of His spirit can understand. But they must believe; they must also repent; and that repentance that is necessary does not consist in weeping and mourning over sin, but in turning away from it. No man can make God his friend by continuing in sin, neither can any woman. In order to come near unto God and to be taught of Him, they must be humble and child-like, they must be willing to receive instruction, being determined in their hearts to turn away from wrong-doing of every kind, and to cleave unto that which is right. This is a lesson for Latter-day Saints as well as latter-day sinners. If we want to learn more of the things and ways of God, if we want to draw near to Him, we must be humble and child-like, tractable in our nature, making ourselves acquainted with that which God has revealed, and walking in the way which He has pointed out. If the inhabitants of the earth will walk according to the light that God has given to them, whether by the spirit that comes to them naturally in their birth, or by that higher endowment called the gift of the Holy Ghost, they will receive a still greater degree of power and light, and their pathway will become brighter and brighter even to the perfect day. If there be any darkness in them, it is because they walk in the ways of darkness, because they do the deeds of evil. No man can come unto God unless he has put away his sins and his follies and is willing to be taught of God. If he thinks that God will come to his terms and accept his whims and notions, he will make a failure of it. If he is willing to hearken, is child-like, willing to be taught, saying in his soul, "O God, manifest thy ways to me, and with thy help I will walk therein," the Lord will hear and answer him and he will learn of God, and the more he walks in the ways of the Lord the closer he will get to God. But only by faith, repentance, baptism, and by the laying on of hands of those whom God has authorized, can the inhabitants of the earth receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by which they may fully learn and comprehend divine things.

People marvel at the condition of the Latter-day Saints, at their tractability, at the mode of their worship, at the manner in which they sustain the authorities of the Church; and they conclude that we are a people led by the craftiness of men, that we are under men who are desirous to exert authority and power, and be looked up to as superior to their fellows. They reason in that way because they do not understand us; because they do not comprehend our ways, nor the way of the Lord. The reason why the Latter-day Saints are as united as they are, as tractable, as willing to be obedient, is because they have learned for themselves the truth of the Gospel they have espoused. They know there is a God; they know that He lives; they know Jesus is the Son of God; they know that by experience that if they hearken to the voice of the Lord—the word of the Lord given to them through His servants—that they are happy, that they have that peace of which I have spoken; and on the contrary, if they do obey the counsels of heaven, they have not that peace, they are not satisfied with themselves, and they are in the dark. The reason why the Latter-day Saints are so tractable, so united, and so devoted to the doctrine of this Church, is because they know something about it for themselves; they know it is true, for God has borne witness to them, they have been brought into communion with Him, and this is the secret of it.

Now, my brethren and sisters, you know that what I am talking about is true; you know it in your own experience. The Holy Ghost has borne record to you that what I am telling you is not fiction, but is a living fact. And we need not take up the Bible to read the books containing therein to find out the truth of our religion; we know it is true without that. Yet, when we read

the contents of this book we find that it corresponds with that which God has revealed to us. We do not depend upon the man who baptized us, or him who laid his hands upon us to impart the Holy Ghost, for a knowledge of this work, we depend upon the inspiration of the Lord—the only source of knowledge of divine things. Every man and every woman in this Church, and every boy and girl who has received the Gospel in sincerity and has verily been born again, has obtained a testimony concerning this work and knows of its divinity for himself or herself. But God has set in the Church for our guidance and direction, Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers and Bishops, and other authorities, that the Church with all its branches may be taught in the ways of the Lord that there may be order in the Church, and that all things may be governed according to the will of God. And we know that when we hearken to the voice of those men we are blessed of God, and when they speak to us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit in our hearts bears witness to us that what they say is true. Some one may inquire, If all the people have the Holy Ghost, if all the people are brought to the condition that they may learn of God for themselves and be gradually led into the presence of the Father, what need of Apostles, what need of Prophets, etc.? There is great need of them. They are absolutely necessary to the government of the Church and Kingdom of God. Without them there could be no proper church government, and, indeed, without them we could not receive the blessings that come from the ordinances. God's plan is to call certain men and endow them with authority, and place upon them the authority to act for Him. This is called the Holy Priesthood, and in that right and authority they preach and administer the ordinances of His Church. It is through the authority of this Holy Priesthood that people are inducted into the Church, through that channel they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, without which it could not be conferred. The Holy Spirit is poured out universally, as I have before remarked, so that all people receive it; but the gift of the Holy Ghost is a higher endowment by which man may be brought into communion with the Lord after having received the ordinances, which must be administered by men holding the Holy Priesthood and authorized to officiate therein. That is God's way. When people receive this divine blessing they become members of His Church, an organization ordained for the benefit and blessing of God's people; an organization which in all respects is after the ancient pattern. In becoming members of the Church we subscribe to the rules thereof. No undue influence is used to induce people to join our Church, or to retain their membership after they have joined it; if they do not wish to subscribe to the rules of the Church, they are at liberty to sever their connection with it; but if they do retain their standing in it, they are expected to subscribe to its rules. At the head of this Church are three men who are united in all things as to its government, representing the Holy Trinity who also are one; not one in personality, but one in spirit, one in faith, one in action, one in desire, one in object. We have a President and two Counselors, who stand at the head of the Church. The President stands at the head of that quorum. God calls him to be His mouthpiece to the whole body. If the Lord has any revelations for the Church, as an organized body, He communicates them through the head. In the case of this Church He warned and forewarned the Latter-day Saints as an organized community, not to receive revelations through any one save the head of the Church. The Lord said, "And this ye shall know assuredly that there is none other appointed unto you to receive the commandments until he be taken, if he abide in me * * * for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead; and this shall be a law unto you, that you receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments. And this I give you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me." This is the order. While, therefore, every man and woman can receive the Holy Ghost and know that God lives, can ask and receive, seek and find, knock

and have the door opened to him; while everyone can have divine light and comprehend the truth for himself, while it is the privilege of every man to so live that his soul shall be full of the light of heaven, by which he may comprehend the purposes of God as they shall affect men and nations, yet, as a member of the Church he must hearken to the voice of Him who stands at the head, for that is the order. "My house is a house of order, saith the Lord, and not a house of confusion." If He has anything for the Church, as an organized body, He will speak through the head; and if we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit we will see the safety of it, we will see that without this order we would be liable to be led astray. God will not speak to His Church, through the foot, but through the head. And if the body is of the same spirit as the head, it will respond, just as the members of the human body, if in a healthy condition, respond to the will of the head, in anything that the individual attempts to do. The man standing at the head holds the keys of revelation to the Church; but each individual may receive revelation for himself, if he has the gift of the Holy Ghost. And the Spirit by which God reveals through the head, is the same spirit by which He reveals to the individual for his own benefit. The Church of Christ is a united body; it is not divided against itself, because it is true, and truth is indivisible, it is eternal and cannot be destroyed, neither does it bear testimony against itself. Herein is the unity of the Saints. When the President of the Church speaks, the whole body responds, and when he brings forth anything for our guidance, we say in our hearts, under the same influence by which he is inspired, that is the word of God, and we rejoice in it and hearken to it. Thereby are the faith and obedience of the Latter-day Saints made manifest. And they do this not to man, but to God. Through the head of the Church the voice of God comes to the people, and when they obey it, it is not to man they bow, for the Latter-day Saints are not man-worshippers. They have come out from the midst of priestcraft, they have thrown off the yoke of bondage, and put on the liberty of the everlasting Gospel; and when they yield to the authority of the Holy Priesthood, they bow to God Almighty, their Father, who is represented in His servants upon earth, and not to man. "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm." We worship God our heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and that which we obey we receive as coming from Him and not from man. That is the order, if we have eyes to see, and hearts to comprehend it. And it is the same with all the different authorities of the Church, each one in his place and calling; one not interfering with another, every part and portion of the Holy Priesthood being adapted to every other part, as each part of the human system is adapted and essential to the well being of the other parts. The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee; neither can the foot say to the head, I have no need of thee, but each part has need of the other. And there is union in it; there is beauty in it. No one officer or member of the priesthood can encroach upon the privileges of another; but each one has his duties defined, and all are necessary for the order and government of the Church, for the preaching of the Gospel, for the gathering of the Saints, for the instruction of the people that all might be led in the path of life, until they come to the fullness of the knowledge of the Son of God, and be like a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Apostles are necessary in their place; Seventies in theirs; High Priests in theirs; Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons in theirs; Bishops and Presidents of Stakes, etc., in theirs, all having been appointed and ordained of God. This organization is unique in its character; there is nothing like it among the institutions of men, there is nothing like it in the world. There is nothing of an earthly character to be compared with it. It is beautiful, it is glorious, it is harmonious, it is perfect, because it is the work of God. And if we would carry it out fully and perfectly, what a splendid organization we would have! What a mighty people we would be! a people whose God is the Lord, all moving along in perfect harmony, each one accomplishing his part in this