

else had to be told about us, in order to excite the prejudices of the people and to maintain that opposition which was thought proper to wage against us.

As I have said, Joseph Smith bore testimony to these things. And there is this that must be said: The same gifts and blessings that attended the exercise of the authority of the Apostleship in early days again appeared among men. When they were promised the remission of their sins, they received the remission of their sins. Hundreds that were baptized by Joseph Smith and the men whom he had ordained testified to this. They said they knew their sins were remitted, for God had given them a testimony to that effect. They knew they had received the Holy Ghost, and they bore testimony to it wherever they went. The old union and love that characterized the Church of Christ reappeared. Men loved each other with a new love—a love that exceeded the love of woman, a love that exceeded every love known to man. This became a feature that was hated, because a people who loved each other, who dwelt together in union, as the Latter-day Saints did, were considered a dangerous people. One of the great charges that is made against us is that we love one another and that we cling to each other; we are not divided. Men testified that the gifts were restored. The sick were healed. The blind had their sight restored. The deaf had their ears unstopped. The old gifts that Jesus exhorted the people to exercise faith to obtain reappeared; not with the power that they ought to have appeared in, because there was unbelief to be contended against, as there is now. Faith is not obtained in a moment. It is a gift, it is true; but faith grows and increases. It has grown and increased in the earth. The Latter-day Saints bore testimony that they had received these gifts. This excited the animosity of those who hated them.

It is a remarkable fact that among the chief persecutors of the Latter-day Saints were men who professed to be ministers of religion. There are many instances in our history of this class heading mobs, with weapons in their hands, to destroy the people and to drive them from their homes, because they had an unpopular religion and did not worship as they did. They cried as fiercely for our destruction as did the same class for the destruction of our Lord and Master. Pilate would have released the Son of God if they had let him, instead of Barrabbas; but they wanted Jesus to be the victim, not the robber and murderer. They wanted that pure and holy being to be sacrificed to their rage, and they cried out for the release of Barrabbas, and not the Son of God. The same class have incited the people in our day to cry out for the destruction of the Latter-day Saints. Not all; but this has been the characteristic of many of that class. Instead of rejoicing in the news that God had spoken, it has only caused them to be embittered against the man who made the declaration. They never stopped to examine or to enquire, like the people of Nineveh did when Jonah went into their midst, to see whether there was any truth in the message or not. But they fought it persistently, and incited

others to do the same, until Joseph Smith was murdered in cold blood—slain as other Prophets have been. The law could not reach him, it was said, but powder and lead could; and he was cruelly martyred, with his brother Hyrum, and fell a victim to this spirit that destroyed Jesus and the Apostles. It seems a strange thing that this should be the case. It seems as though men were not willing to leave it to God to punish what they allege is heresy. They are not willing that God should send bad men to hell, as they say we are, and punish them in eternity. They are afraid to trust God to punish us, if we are wicked. They want to take the punishment in their own hands. That is not a right feeling. If our doctrine is not of God, it will fall. There is no need to destroy us, because God is able to take care of His own work and to defend the truth.

I want to say to the Latter-day Saints, never give way in the least to this spirit of persecuting people. They may teach false doctrine; they may say things that you know are not true; they may pursue a course that you know is entirely opposite to the will of God; but never you be guilty of persecution in any form. I have heard of boys in this city making sport of the Salvation Army and ridiculing it. I hope they are not children of Latter-day Saints. I would just as soon defend and fight for them, if necessary, as I would for anyone else, to have their rights and liberties secured to them. This is a land of liberty. Every man has the right to believe as he pleases, and to do as he pleases, so long as his acts do not interfere with the rights of his fellow men and he does not infringe upon their liberties. We as a people have suffered from these things, and we ought to be the first and foremost to defend human liberty. If men are in error, they are to be pitied, not punished, unless they carry their errors beyond proper limits and infringe upon the liberties of others. So long as their views and practices do not infringe upon the law, they should be protected in the exercise of their rights. I was not in the city when the poor creature was lynched that shot the marshal of this city—Andrew Burt; but when I heard of it I felt indignant. I do not know who it was that was guilty of that; but anything of this kind we should set our faces against. There has been some talk in our public newspapers about vigilance committees. Not one of us should lend his countenance or aid to anything of that kind. We have suffered too much from mob violence to ever do this. Better suffer innumerable wrongs than to transcend the limits of the law. A mob is a most hateful organization. Men do things under such circumstances that they would not dare to do individually, and they shield themselves in the practice of great wrongs. There should be no spirit of this kind indulged in among the Latter-day Saints. We as a people should take a course to show all men that we have profited by the teachings that the Lord has given unto us. He has revealed unto us the Gospel. He has given unto us a testimony concerning its ordinances. What a great blessing it is to know that we have received the remission of our sins through obedience

to these ordinances, and that we have a claim upon the promises which God has made! These things are not left to supposition or to imagination. The effort of the Elders of this Church has been to create faith in the minds of the people. I have always hesitated about baptizing any man or woman, in my ministry among the people abroad, without impressing upon them, with all the power that I had, to seek unto God to know for himself and herself that this was the work of God. The baptism of hundreds would not amount to anything unless they received that testimony. It is the privilege of every human being to receive this; for God is a God of revelation. He is the same today that He was a thousand years ago, or that He was at the beginning of creation. He has not grown old. He has not lost his powers. He has not become deaf. His heart is still moved with compassion for His children. His voice can still be heard through His minister, the Holy Ghost. And when you receive the Holy Ghost, God is with you; for he is one of the Godhead; and it is the privilege of every man and woman upon the earth to receive the Holy Ghost and have God with them, if they will obey the ordinances which God has prescribed.

My brethren and sisters, if you have entered into covenant with God, as you have, God will keep His covenant. You may be as humble and as obscure as it is possible for a human being to be; but I say to you God will never forget the covenant that he has made with you, and that you have made with Him. If you have gone forward and obeyed His law, and He has made promises to you, He will fulfil them to the very letter, and you need never be afraid that He will forget them. Some people seem to forget the promises which God has made, and they become discouraged and think they are forgotten by God. I tell you that God is watching over all of you. He has made covenants with us, and it is for us to exercise faith before Him to have these covenants fulfilled. It is our privilege to have the gifts that were in the Church in ancient days, in greater abundance than we have them now. Because men and women get old and think they are almost forgotten, it does not follow that that is the case. Our God has His eye upon all His children; and it ought to be a source of continued comfort to us that He has made covenants with us. Unworthy as we are, sinners as we are, guilty of many wrongs and weaknesses as we are, He is ready to forgive us when we repent of them. When we were baptized and covenanted to keep His commandments, He gave unto us a testimony that our sins were remitted. When hands were laid upon us by the servants of God He bestowed upon us the gift of the Holy Ghost, and we knew it, and have known it ever since. If He condescended to bestow these blessings upon us, He will condescend still to remember the promises which He has made. He will hear our prayers in hours of despair and darkness, when it would seem as though we were friendless, if we go to Him and call upon Him. He is a God near at hand, and not afar off. He will help us and open our way before us. And we should exercise faith in Him. That is the great principle that we should