

prove, counsel, and to guide the people in the ways of truth and righteousness, and to say to the people, "Follow us as we follow Christ." That is what the Lord requires of His servants. And we are not seeking to fasten shackles upon the Latter-day Saints; but we are seeking to make them free, by the reception of truth in their own hearts, that they may be free from sin; and when a man is free from sin, he is a free man indeed, for he then becomes a son of God, and he is not in bondage to error, or to darkness, or to any foul spirit, because the liberty wherewith God has surrounded him has made him free indeed. Therefore, you need not be afraid of your brethren. Even if they should attempt to counsel you sometimes with regard to temporal matters, you need not be afraid of them, because if they ever deign to counsel you on such matters it will be according to the light and wisdom they have received from God for your good, and not for your hurt. They are not going to advise you for your hurt; they are not going to wrong you; they are not going to lead you into traps; but they are going to lead you out of traps, and enable you to escape the pitfalls that are dug for your feet. They may try to cut you loose from the leading strings of designing politicians, of atheists, and of unbelievers in God and the truth, that you may be led more fully by the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You do not need to be afraid of President Wilford Woodruff, you need not be afraid of Brother Cannon, nor of Joseph F. Smith, because we are not here to injure you, or to counsel you to do that which is not right in the sight of God, neither are we here to deprive you of any privilege or right that God designs you should enjoy—and He designs that you should enjoy all rights and all privileges, and that you should be a free people, and the richest of all people upon the face of the earth. As we were going home last night, one of the brethren remarked how true the saying of the Lord was that we should be the richest of all people; he said it was indeed true. Poor as we may seem to be, there is not another people of the same number gathered together anywhere in the world, with a community of interest, that are possessed of so many blessings and are so universally surrounded with the favors of heaven and earth as are the Latter-day Saints. There is not another people on the face of the globe, to my knowledge, that possess their own homes to the extent that the Latter-day Saints do, nor another community in the world that possesses as many of the comforts and blessings of life as this community. A greater percentage of them own their own homes, are better clad, better fed, better housed, more intelligent, and are nearer God than any other people that I know of. Take all the different churches as you find them, and they cannot show a parallel to this Church in this regard. They may show very rich men, and a larger amount of property in the hands of a few; but among them wealth is not so evenly distributed as you find it among the Latter-day Saints. What does that prove? It proves that the leaders, the teachers and the counselors of this people have been wise leaders and counselors, and they have sought to establish sound doctrine and principle in the hearts of the people. They have sought to teach them industry, economy, prudence, and abstinence from every practice and appetite injurious to them. They have sought to teach them love, charity, kindness and forgiveness one towards another. Indeed, they have sought to teach them the truth. And as far as the people have learned to listen to their teachings and have adopted their

instructions and counsels, they have prospered, for God has blessed them, and they have their own homes and an abundance of this world's goods. This is what God designs they should have, and more abundantly, too, if they will only be wise in the use of it and still remember Him from whom these blessings come; for it would be sinful to forget the Giver of the gift in the enjoyment of it.

Another thing: Men that have been true to the principles of the Gospel, and to their wives and children, God has prospered and blessed them; their fruit has not cast itself before its time, and it has not been destroyed by the devourer. The blight and the alldew and the curses that infest the earth when God is displeased with men, have not followed and rested upon those who have been faithful and diligent in the performance of their duties. Any man would be foolish to say that God will bless the idler, and him who squanders his time, and who does not seek wisdom in the direction of his labors. It is not expected that God will bless such people as this. When a man seeks the spirit of wisdom and of inspiration from the Almighty, he will cease to sleep longer than is needful; when he toils he will not become so absorbed in the accomplishment of his purpose that he will labor unwisely and until he destroys his physical energy and vitality, but he will take proper rest, and will not run until he faints. Thus he will direct himself in the channels of wisdom, economy, industry, patience and perseverance, and God will give him the increase; the earth will yield in its strength for him, his flocks and herds will prosper, he will be blessed in his basket and in his store, he will be blessed when he lies down and when he rises up, when he goes out and when he comes in, and the Lord will build him up, because he has the fear of God before his eyes, because he loves his neighbor as he loves himself, and he is not praying: "O Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife; us four, and no more. Amen." Such a man does not pray in this way, but he prays for the welfare of Zion, and the longevity of these men who have been raised up of the Lord to be our leaders, our counselors and our advisers in the principles of the Gospel. He prays for his neighbor, and he will drive the cattle out of his neighbor's stackyard to save the property as he would save his own. He will not rob his neighbor of his water rights, no matter how badly he may need the water himself. But he will keep the commandments of God and do his duty as a Latter-day Saint. When, however, a man has the spirit of evil in his heart, when he is overcome by selfishness and by covetousness, look out for him; for he may steal your water, he may pull down your bars and let the cattle into your fields, in order to keep them out of his own, and he will do anything in the world to build himself up whether it be at the expense of his neighbor or not. That is the way men do who are actuated by the spirit of man. But Latter-day Saints do not that sort of thing. They are taught better; they know better; they live above such groveling, contemptible and wicked conduct. Instead of that, they seek to do good to their neighbor, and build up Zion, as well as do good to themselves. This is what we are trying to teach you, for the Gospel inspires us to do this. We are trying to teach you to be united, to love the Lord, to help your neighbor, and to love your wives and your husbands and your children. We are not only trying to teach it to you by word of mouth, but also by examples as God gives us the wisdom to do it. Now, if any of you can show me where I can

do better than I am doing in the government of my family, or in my conduct toward my neighbor, or in anything that I have to do, I will thank you from the bottom of my heart if you will come to me as a brother and show me where I can do better than I am doing. My aim is to do better, to become a better man, to rise out of the foolish, groveling things of this world and get on a higher plane, and to find out something that will be beneficial to me after I have done with this mortal condition. I want to be able to meet God my Father when I get through with this mission that I am on here, and say to Him, "Father, I am clean. I have not the blood of my kindred upon my hands, neither is there found upon my skirts the blood of men. I have sought to do my duty, to warn the people, to bear testimony of the truth." I want to meet Him with a conscience void of offense. For I believe in God my Heavenly Father; I believe in Jesus Christ, His Son, and I believe in the doctrines that He taught, and I believe further, that the world today, in what is called the higher criticism of the Bible, is trying to do away with the doctrines and teachings of Jesus Christ because they cannot look upon these doctrines and the examples of holy men of old without shame and confusion. They do not do the things that Jesus commanded, and they know they do not. The ministers seek to become popular, and they dare not come before their congregations and reprove them for sin and show them where they are in error and darkness. They have to come before them with eloquence, to tickle their fancy; they have to praise them instead of condemning them for their wicked deeds. If they did not do it, their congregations would very soon discharge them and hire somebody else. They know this, for they teach for hire and they divine for money. They are without authority from God, and they speak as the scribes and the pharisees and not as one sent from God. The men that teach in this Church teach as men having authority from the Almighty. They teach the truth. They are called of God, and if a man sins they dare to tell him so. I dare to say—and I do not care who it strikes; if it hits me or anybody else, it makes no difference—I am opposed to Sabbath-breaking. It is wrong. It is contrary to the law of God. It is a transgression of the commandment of the Lord. I am opposed to men, women and children going to pleasure resorts on the Sabbath day. And if I should do it myself, it would be in violation of my conscience and of the promptings of the Spirit of the Lord to me, and I should come under condemnation. I believe it is wrong to visit saloons, to drink and guzzle beer, and whiskey and strong drinks; and men that are addicted to that kind of thing are transgressing the laws of God, and they are neither Christians nor gentlemen when they do such things as that, because a man that will violate the laws God cannot be a Christian. The laws of God require men to be virtuous, to be respectful, to be honorable, to be honest, and to be pure-minded, and therefore a man who will trample upon the laws of God is neither a Christian nor a gentleman. I do not believe it right to wear or take the name of God in vain, and any man who does it is under condemnation before the Lord, and the Lord will not acknowledge him if he does not repent, neither will the Lord prosper him. Though he may seem to prosper and thrive like a green bay tree, yet there will come a time when he will be cut short, and his progress and growth will cease; whereas, the man that observes the commandments of the Lord and does right, there will be no end to